

# The Listener

Published every Thursday by the British Broadcasting Corporation



The Crescent restaurant at the Festival Pleasure Gardens, London, which opened this week

In this number:

**John Mason Brown, William Plomer, Evelyn Waugh**



## THE BRITISH COLONIES

THE WORLD'S COLONIAL TERRITORIES have steadily gained in importance in recent years because the basic problems of colonial development are now closely bound up with world problems. The British colonies, in particular, in their transition from imperial rule to a working partnership, project economic, financial, constitutional, technological, cultural and human problems of the largest significance.

For this reason, and in the interest both of the colonial peoples and of world stability, full and informed discussion of colonial questions is an obvious necessity.

Owing to the shortage of newsprint, *The Times* has been unable in recent years to give as much space to colonial affairs as formerly. During 1950, therefore, it published as separate supplements three special Surveys of the British Colonies. These were the pilot projects for *The Times Review of the British Colonies*, which has been established as a regular quarterly publication, issued on the first Tuesday in March, June, September and December.

*The Times Review of the British Colonies* draws its principal contributors from special correspondents of *The Times* and from recognized authorities on colonial subjects. It upholds the policy that the colonial territories should be advanced progressively to self-government within the Commonwealth, and advocates the economic development of these territories in the interests of the inhabitants themselves and of a general increase in the world's wealth.

The March issue was widely read at home and abroad and as widely welcomed. The next issue, which resumes the commentary on colonial affairs during the preceding quarter and discusses a similar diversity of themes, will appear on June 5.

## THE TIMES *Review of* THE BRITISH COLONIES

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# The Listener

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## Canada's Concern with Foreign Policy

By J. B. McGEACHY

IT used to be true, and not so very long ago, that getting a letter from Canada in Britain was like hearing from another planet: that certainly is not true any longer. A Canadian talk in this early summer of 1951 is likely to sound rather like one you heard last week or will hear next week, from a neighbour. Today the Briton, the American, the Canadian, and to some extent I suppose, the western European, all talk politics in the same terms—they are coping with similar, if not identical, questions. Thus, in Canada we are suffering from inflation. Our prices are climbing and our trade unions are working might and main to push up wages at the same rate or faster. We also have the problem of how to enlarge our armed services to a size unheard of in peace time, while maintaining and even improving our standards of social security.

Another thing that is troubling us in Canada—and this may be a worse headache here than elsewhere—is man-power: I mean, the business of finding enough hands to do the various jobs, productive and military, that have to be done. Then, like Britain, this country is adjusting itself to the new phenomenon of American leadership in world affairs. For Canada, as for Britain, this means trying to co-operate with the United States as a good ally without being submerged or, as we say here, 'pushed around'. I am sure these questions all have a familiar ring to you; though we do not live in one world at any rate we are all in the same boat.

Inflation, many think in Canada, is the most serious present threat to our efforts for peace and progress. It has been described as 'Stalin's secret weapon', not that anybody blames the Kremlin for it, but the theory is that the fall in the value of money, if it is not checked, could, in the long run, destroy the western economy

and give the communists a bloodless victory. Whether or not that is far-fetched, everyone recognises that inflation is dangerous. Our Government claims to have slain this dragon, or at least to have it by the tail, but this claim is not put forward with much confidence now. The measures adopted to make it good, including taxes to reduce spending, and restrictions on credit for the expansion of civilian industry, have not yet produced their full effect. But we are assured that they will within a month or two. Meanwhile, our cost of living index has passed 180 (the base is 100 for the average of prices in 1935-39) and it appears to be still climbing, though the rate of increase may be slowing down. Of course it is evident that Canada cannot cure a world-wide inflation; we are a self-confident nation, but not as self-confident as all that. The main causes of inflation, notably American stock-piling of raw materials, lie outside Canada, and the best we can do is protect ourselves against its worst effects and try to increase our output of the goods the world needs, like food, lumber and metals.

That brings us to the second and third of the problems I listed above. We are engaged in an effort to build up our military strength. Some believe this effort is inadequate, but at any rate it is far more ambitious than anything previously attempted by Canada, except in time of war. We plan to have, by 1953 or earlier, a navy of one hundred ships, an air force of forty squadrons, active and reserve, and an army big enough to supply reinforcements for Korea and, if need be, to provide a brigade group for General Eisenhower's Command in Europe, and to protect Canada itself against an airborne attack from the north, which our military experts think not likely, but not fantastic either. At the same time we are planning to turn out munitions of many types in large



volume, enough to equip our own forces with a surplus for friends overseas. And while we are doing that it looks obvious that we should try to maintain at least our normal production of wheat, timber, paper, nickel, and other commodities the western world needs badly. This programme is going to make heavy demands on our relatively small labour force. Canada's population, when we take a census this summer, is expected to be around 14,250,000. It has been suggested by an Opposition spokesman that the time has come for a national registration and a system of selective service that would allocate men to the armed services and essential industries. But our Advisory Council on Man-power says that is not necessary at this stage, and the Government has accepted its opinion. We may yet have to come to a planned use of man-power; for the present we are doing something to relieve a shortage of hands by admitting more immigrants than in some former years.

### Stiffer Taxes

Preparedness, of course, involves stiffer taxes. Our income tax was boosted one-fifth by the Dominion Budget and other levies increased correspondingly. But we are managing, at the same time, to keep up and even improve our level of social security. Up till now, and since the nineteen-twenties, Canada has had an old age pension at seventy with a means test. It is now proposed to lower the age to sixty-five and, for everyone seventy or older, to abolish the means test, and this new plan may go into effect next year. Our old age pension is forty dollars a month, which is about thirteen pounds, and may strike you as quite generous. But forty dollars does not go far with beef at a dollar a pound—that is six and eightpence; eggs at seventy cents a dozen—that is about four and six, and an ordinary run-of-the-mill man's shirt at four to five dollars. Our socialist M.P.s have been pointing out that forty dollars is worth just twenty-two by pre-war standards, and asking that the pension should be increased. But the Government has decided that getting rid of the means test will be all the Treasury and the taxpayers can stand for the present.

But these matters of mere dollars and cents, important though we think they are, take a back seat in our minds when we think about national policy and what the future may be like. The big questions for us are whether the western allies, including Canada, are taking the right action to prevent a third world war, and whether Canada in particular is doing what it can to that end. In other words, foreign policy has become our chief concern—something that has happened never before in Canadian history. Every year the Canadian Parliament has a debate on foreign policy, but the one that wound up the other day was the liveliest on record, according to press gallery observers. For once the members had a real and difficult foreign policy issue to discuss. How to behave as an ally, and, in this case, as an ally of a nation immensely stronger than yourself, is the heart of the question. Canada, as we who live here are just learning, has practically no experience at all in the art or science of being an ally in peace time. We belong to the British Commonwealth, but that is a special relationship, rather different from an alliance—much stronger, and yet less binding. It is notoriously hard to define but this one can say: we know where we stand with Britain and the other Commonwealth countries. The members of this group have worked out a system of consultation that usually leads to common action, but still leaves each one free to make up its own mind and go its own way.

There is no parallel to this arrangement, past or present. Canada's present commitments are something quite different—different in the mere fact of being commitments. The Commonwealth tie never called for written pledges to go to war in any given circumstances, but now Canada is clearly pledged, with eleven other countries, to defend western Europe, and is actually taking part in a limited Pacific war, or police action if you prefer the term, with some of the same group of associates. Alliances of this kind are an old story to European lands: they are a brand-new experience for Canada, and we have, presumably, a lot to learn about conduct-

ing ourselves in this new environment. How much freedom of action do we retain? How much right to be consulted? What weight can we expect our opinions to carry? Particularly, we apply these questions to our new relationship with the United States.

About six weeks ago our Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Lester Pearson, made a speech in Toronto about Canadian-American relations. It was much discussed at the time and the parliamentary debate that I spoke of revolved around it. Mr. Pearson said in Toronto that we hoped to march with the United States, but intended to stand on our own feet and make our own decisions. Canada would not be an echo of Washington, he said. He implied, though he used more diplomatic terms than the ones I am going to use, that Canada would not take American directions as to what its duty was in any particular circumstances. He went on to say that in times past Canada used to be suspicious of what we call 'Downing Street' or 'Whitehall' influence; we used to be afraid that London might get us into quarrels or entanglements that did not concern us. That time was long past, said Mr. Pearson, and the present danger was that we might transfer our touchiness from London to Washington. He asked the United States to pay some attention to Canadian opinion. He said Canadian support of American policy overseas was not to be counted on automatically. As you would expect, there were varied reactions to this speech in our House of Commons. Some members said they were glad to hear a Canadian Minister speaking out in this independent fashion; others scolded Mr. Pearson for carrying a chip on his shoulder, as they said; he was reminded that the United States was carrying the heaviest military load and that Canada's share was small. He was asked by Opposition speakers if he thought it wise or prudent to engage in inter-allied bickering when the great need was unity in the face of a common danger. Once again you probably find the pattern of Canadian debate quite familiar.

Rather strangely, one important point about Mr. Pearson's Toronto speech was not mentioned in the Ottawa debate—its date; it was delivered the day before General MacArthur's dismissal, and without foreknowledge of that dramatic event. It was undoubtedly intended as notice to the United States that Canada did not favour, and would not necessarily support, the MacArthur plan to carry the war to China. Next day, President Truman's action made it plain that the Washington Administration likewise rejected that plan. In Parliament, Mr. Pearson carefully refrained from offering that explanation of his speech, and from expressing any satisfaction over General MacArthur's removal. The Americans, as you know, have resented allied jubilation over the change in command, and Canada has been officially polite on the subject.

### Ottawa Agrees with Washington

But there is no question that Canada has been on the side of Mr. Truman, General Marshall and General Bradley, in the extraordinary debate that has been going on at Washington. The Canadian view, as Mr. Pearson stated it to Parliament, is that the fighting should be limited to Korea, but that there should be no bribing of the Chinese to accept a cease-fire by an offer of Formosa and membership in the United Nations. For the present then, Ottawa agrees with Washington, and there is no immediate need to insist on the right to be consulted, and the right to take an independent line. How soon the need will arise is an open question. The most recent official utterances from Washington about Communist China are distinctly hostile. They suggest a long-term political aim of ousting the Peiping regime and restoring Chiang Kai-shek. I do not think Canadians regard that as practical politics. They are more inclined to believe that economic help is the right way to win friends and influence people in Asia. But on that question our ideas are still unformed and our performance to date has been fumbling and inadequate. What we are sure of is that we do not want another war and that the Western Allies are doing at least some of the things that must be done to avoid that disaster.

—Home Service



# Clouds in a Cloudless Sky

By JOHN MASON BROWN

**T**HE sky is cloudless where I happen to be today. Everything in this little New England village seems as enduringly serene as the white houses, chaste and charming, on Main Street, or as the tranquil elms which have long shaded and guarded them.

The lawns are a soothing green, the gardens are in bloom; sailboats are scurrying across the blinding blue of the harbour; the tennis courts at the club are all taken; there are bathers on the pier. Man and nature, it would seem, are on vacation, relishing the springtime ease, relaxing from the winter's rigours. But the sense of worries laid aside, and of peace complete, is only an illusion here in the United States.

No sky is cloudless now: the storm, however distant by the map, is present in everyone's mind and heart: its thunder is a part of every conversation: only the littlest children do not hear it. On the beaches, their kind of beaches, they still pile up their edifices of sand, expecting them to survive the encroachments of the next wave.

The rest of us see the darkness in the sunshine's mist: the calm around us cannot shield us from the gale. We know, even when we are on vacation, that no one anywhere can at present take a vacation from the world. We live, as we have grown accustomed to living, strangely double lives. Most of us, as yet, continue to live the personal and professional lives we cherish. We live them by the standards, and with the interests, the hopes, the pleasures, the friendships, and the family affections made possible by the semblance of peace. But we also live that other life, the life which the headlines proclaim, and the combat stories tell. We live engulfed in the repeated pattern, sickened by its having to repeat itself within less than six short years. We live once more waiting for official statements, scanning maps blackened by battle lines: we live, drawn by apprehension, to our radios. We live conscious of the young dying again, of courage tested daily, of homes disrupted, of troops moving, of greater armies forming, of civilians ceasing to be civilians in order to form them, and of plans being drawn up tardily for the defence or evacuation of our cities here in America.

We live with the talk of controls, priorities, and ration-

ing, and with the contemptible selfishness of hoarders having already reappeared. We live, if we are young men, under the threat of having our education, our professions, and our dreams suspended. If we are older, and have seen it once, or twice, we live, however great our melancholy, feeling deep within ourselves the insistent restlessness of the desire to be a part of it if it must be, yet dreading to be told if we are too old. Such news is in itself a kind of death. We live on the eastern coast, close to the conflict, though an ocean and a continent away from it, aware of what is happening there, and what may well



'Relaxing from the winter's rigours': beach scene in Maine, U.S.A.



'Recognition of the future's uncertainty': United States troops marching to the pier on Staten Island for embarkation for Europe to reinforce troops under General Eisenhower's command

happen elsewhere. Yes, and here too! We live with the recognition of the future's uncertainty, certain only of our beliefs, and that all we believe in may be in peril.

Living this dual life is not easy for anyone. No wonder parents, if they have sons, find themselves looking at these sons with a terrible intentness; or that the sons, if they are in college, or about to go there, discover that it is impossible to give their whole minds to their studies. No wonder their older brothers, starting out on their first jobs, or at last in the swing of jobs to which they have returned, and free of the uniform, cannot apply themselves as wholeheartedly as once they might have done. No wonder, for that matter, that their fathers and mothers and all people worthy of being described as citizens, scrutinise their own employment, and question values which, in peacetime, they would accept unthinkingly. To be at war, openly and to the full, is one thing: to be at peace, real peace, is another! To be at both is confusing, to put it mildly—yes, very mildly indeed!

Lives can be altered by environment, no less than by circumstance. Mr. Atkinson, a wise man, blessed with a rare spirit among his other gifts, long ago realised this, and stated it admirably in his fine book: *The Cingalese Prince*. In 1933, Mr. Atkinson escaped from the confinements of the island of Manhattan, where for many years, as he has put it, he practised mortality; and where, fortunately for all of us, he continues to do so. As an active philosopher, and a vacationing dramatic critic, Mr. Atkinson circumnavigated the globe on a British freighter, the name of which, *The Cingalese Prince*, he



gave to his record of that voyage. Prowling across the Pacific at the 36th parallel—not the 38th—Mr. Atkinson considered, among other things, the strange changes which can overtake literature in the presence of nature's immensity, when men and their works are rudely reduced in scale. 'Literature', he concluded, 'is a bloodless subterfuge, when you are plunged into the sources from which literature derived... Literature is put to the test every time a man puts out to sea'.

If Mr. Atkinson found that verse-reading was not heavy enough for him on a ship of *The Cingalese Prince's* tonnage, if he discovered that he could not hear clever books above the wind roaring against his porthole, if the steady pulse of the engine compelled him to distrust sentences which were too self-conscious, and the language he came to like was made up of plain, simple and straightforward words, we just now, all of us, are in a position to understand those shifts in emphasis which a new environment forced upon Mr. Atkinson; we are deeply conscious of them ourselves, brought about as they have been by recent events, by current happenings, and the awareness of future possibilities. We, too, are somewhat at sea! We, too, can hear the roar of engines frightening in their might: we, too, face a typhoon that may be too large even for the Pacific to hold. If, as Mr. Atkinson says, literature is put to the test every time a man puts out to sea, literature and all the arts, yes, and all the values of civilised living, are put to the test every time a nation clears its decks for war, or lives under the threat of war. Assuredly we all know that the time is at hand when actions help most; and many absorptions and professions seem extraneous: they are pushed to the periphery by crisis, and rightly so. If a robber breaks into our homes, or if our houses are on fire, we would be worse than fools to continue reading a book, any book, listening to a symphony, any symphony, or admiring the colours and the compositions of a painting, any painting.

Just now, our very survival as a nation may be at stake. This is a chilling fact which all of us in America must accept. We have no other choice than to make ourselves ready for a possible ordeal. But our sense of danger, proper though it is, can itself tempt us dangerously. However natural the initial impulses may be at such a moment, to question all the refinements of peace-time existence, however inevitable, is the instinct to jettison what is loosely identified as culture when confronted anew with the barbarisms of conflict. However human are the reflexes which challenge the right of beauty, learning and enlightenment to exist side by side with the brutal ugliness of battle, the first and perhaps final surrender any of us could make would be to lose sight in the midst of war, or the threats of war, of the true values of peace.

We must take special pains not to confuse the fight itself with the

reasons for our fighting. This would be to rob our ultimate victory of its point and justification. We may not read at present, or in the months ahead, the same books which might have held our attention once upon a time. Indeed we may find, and many do find, that they have scarcely time at all for reading just now. But not only books which speak to us about our troubled days, but books from other ages which remind us of what is enduring in man, of his potentialities and dignity as an individual, and of what is mightiest, best or most human in his thinking, his aspirations, his sufferings or his behaviour, seem to me to gain importance rather than to lose it in the present emergency. So do all the arts gain this same new importance; so do all the pursuits and occupations which are proofs that man lives by other laws and other impulses than those of the jungle, the mechanised jungle of modern warfare.

Every contemporary war, every modern war, in spite of its fortunate conclusion, from the allied point of view, has changed the world by subtracting from it abidingly. Every modern war has had to represent in order to be won a temporary abdication of ethical and humane standards: every modern war has, in other words, demanded a certain retreat, even of its victors, and meant that they have lost in the very process of winning.

Each modern war—certainly the next one will do so when and if it comes on a wholesale scale—has brought us nearer and nearer, in spite of all the progress man has made, to a new Dark Ages. As a distinguished professor recently wrote to me: 'It has suddenly dawned on me that since my sophomore year in college peace has come to seem abnormal in the world. Young men in their twenties must regard it as being as remote and as purely historical as we in our time regarded war. We must not, we cannot forget, however, that regardless of the threats of darkness, and the thickly gathering storm-clouds, the lamps still burn, and brightly burn'. One of our major duties, along with all the other arduous tests which may lie ahead of us, is to shield these lamps from the gale. Events, our own consciences, or those in authority, will tell us in time what each and all of us may have to do.

Meanwhile I believe—and believe with all my heart—that the teacher must teach twice as hard and twice as persuasively as he has in the past. The student, still free to learn about other than military subjects, must study twice as diligently. Writers must write, painters must paint, musicians play, and architects build, and build better than they have. All of us must mobilise ourselves to go about our tasks while they remain peaceful, hoping that in some small way we may contribute to the holding of those other lines which are not the battle lines, but the reason for the battle lines having been formed.—*Third Programme*

## A British Teacher Looks at Soviet Russia

By RONALD GOULD

**W**HEN it was announced that two of my colleagues and I were to visit Russia as the guests of the Soviet teachers, by letter and by word of mouth I was inundated with enquiries, advice, congratulations, warnings and commiserations. Did I propose to change the colour of my tie? Was I a secret sympathiser? Some were really concerned about my safety. Certainly it was clear my friends expected this to be no ordinary visit. I smiled at their banter, discounted their fears, and set off by air from Northolt to Prague. I stayed there the night, and early the next morning boarded a Russian aeroplane. Anyone who has travelled by air will know what meticulous care is normally taken as the aeroplane takes off. Cigarettes are stubbed out and each passenger fastens his safety belt. Only when these precautions have been taken does the aeroplane take off. In the Russian aeroplanes I travelled in little details of this kind were ignored. There is no steward or stewardess. Passengers sit where they please. And if they wish they continue smoking, and there are no safety straps.

When we arrived at Moscow airport a number of people prominent in the world of education were there to greet us. I found myself being presented with a bouquet and I did not quite know how to hold it! One's embarrassment soon disappeared in the warmth of the welcome. We were taken to an excellent hotel, and no guests could have received more gracious hospitality from their hosts. Indeed,

throughout the whole visit unfailing kindness was shown us by everyone we met.

On the morning after our arrival, we were first taken to the photographers, for photographs had to be taken to enable us to hold a Russian internal passport. I had never before visited a country in which a passport was necessary to travel within the country. We wished to travel from Moscow to Leningrad, so photographs had to be taken and forms completed. It seems that even Russians have to register when they visit another district. After this we began a ceaseless round of visits, starting early in the morning and often ending after midnight. 'Ah, but did you see only what you were intended to see?' I am constantly being asked. Was the tour so arranged as to avoid unpleasant facts? To this, I can only reply that the tour was arranged in consultation with us, and whenever we expressed a desire to see anything, efforts were immediately made to meet our wishes. It is true, of course, that we did not penetrate into the recesses of Russia, but practical experience elsewhere enables one to make allowances for that. The right policy, I thought, was to keep one's eyes and ears open and ask innumerable questions—and often the same question to different people—to try to get at the facts and cross-check them. All this we attempted to do.

It was impossible to travel any distance in and around Moscow without being struck by the vast amount of reconstruction already



achieved and the vast problems of reconstruction still facing the country. Many roads, constructed for the lighter and slower moving traffic of a bygone age, are now in a shocking state. Never have I seen worse roads. No wonder Russian-built cars are slung much higher on their chassis than English and American cars! Yet many new roads have been built, and many more are in course of construction. Incidentally, the heavy work of building new roads appeared to be almost entirely undertaken by women. That is wrong by our standards, but whoever builds them, the new roads are wide, straight and well-paved, enabling high average speeds to be maintained with safety.

### Housing Conditions

In many parts of Moscow, and in the villages outside, there exist some of the worst housing conditions I have ever seen. Small roughly built wooden houses, some not even upright and often in a ramshackle and dilapidated condition, show how deplorably low housing standards have been and still are. Nearer the centre of Moscow the houses are built of stone, but there is tremendous overcrowding. An official guide admitted that in Moscow most houses shelter three or four families. Yet side by side with shocking houses and gross over-crowding, flats have been and are being built in large numbers. At first, the flats were dull grey, drab buildings, undoubtedly providing a much higher standard of accommodation than the tenants had ever enjoyed before, but depressing in their ugliness. Recent buildings, however, are much more pleasing to the eye. The Russians pointed with pride to what had been achieved; they readily agreed that slums and overcrowding still existed, but they were confident that, given time, all their people would be satisfactorily housed.

Our party was, of course, especially interested in Soviet education. I ought to say that all the schools we visited, except a village school and a school for delicate children, were in the cities of Moscow and Leningrad. All we saw were reasonably well constructed, though they lacked the careful finish of schools here. The playgrounds, by our standards, were always too small. It is worth noting that compulsory education in Russia begins later and finishes earlier than in Britain. Children begin school at seven and leave at fourteen; here they begin at five and finish at fifteen. The compulsory period of education is free in both countries. There are, however, school facilities in Russia outside the seven years of compulsory education, for many children attend kindergartens or nursery schools, and after the age of fourteen, many attend technical schools or secondary classes. But the interesting point is that for education before the age of seven and after the age of fourteen, fees are charged, though there are exemptions in certain cases. Even the provision of seven years of compulsory education, compared with ten years here, has strained Russian resources. 20,000 schools were destroyed in the war, and building has not yet caught up with demand. In every school we visited, except one, half the children attended in the morning, and half in the afternoon. No one liked this arrangement, but pending the building of new schools makeshift arrangements seemed unavoidable.

I expect you will be wondering what the schools look like inside. The classrooms, corridors and stairs were clean and neat, and no wonder, for I have never seen schools so generously staffed. There was a porter at the door. Someone was in charge of hats and coats. There was a librarian, and domestic staff for the preparation of school breakfasts and dinners. And there were a number of cleaners. Perhaps they are paid less than in Britain. At all events, there were many of them. The authorities had also provided each school with large numbers of ferns and palms and with a wide range of pictures. All this made the schools look quite cheerful. But what about the equipment? The libraries were very well stocked, and there were ample supplies of equipment and materials, particularly for the teaching of science. The film projector was extensively used in science, history and geography lessons. Yes, the equipment was good, very good.

Naturally I asked many questions about what was taught, and inevitably I compared what I heard with what happened at home. The first striking difference was what was not taught. Whereas in our schools religious instruction must be given, in Russia it must not be given. Perhaps it is superfluous to add that I favour the British practice. It was a surprise to find girls were taught neither cookery nor housewifery, nor is handicraft taught the boys, though some children may learn something of these things in out-of-school activities. The second striking difference was the uniform pattern of work found in all the schools. Here in Britain the work for boys is not the same as for girls. Boys take subjects girls do not, and *vice versa*. And no

two schools follow precisely the same course of study. They choose what textbooks they please. Here there is infinite variety; in Russia uniformity, for the Ministry of Education decides what should be taught and they even publish the textbooks. Thus, in every school in Russia, every child of a given age is doing the same work and reading the same books. Even the length of the lesson is fixed. Every lesson lasts forty-five minutes, and this I thought too long for the younger children.

What are the advantages, if any, of this rigidity? I was given only one answer—that when a child moves from place to place, it is easy to pick up the work in his new school. No doubt that is so, but is it a sufficient—or even the main—reason for the enforcement of uniformity? I think not. I prefer the flexibility, the infinite variety of the British system. This places great responsibility upon the teacher, for he must decide what should be taught. He must take account of the natural advantages of the district where he teaches. Who lived here? What are the industries? How can history, geography and science be made more *real* because of these factors? These are the sort of questions he must ask and answer; and he must take account, above all, of the varying, individual needs of the children in his class. Obviously this places a tremendous responsibility on the individual teacher, but we know there has been no abuse of this freedom. I make no bones about it. Give me the English approach.

I have given you a few of my reflections about Russia, and no doubt you will wonder what the Russians think of us. It is clear that—false though it is—they think we have many warmongers amongst us. At the circus I visited, Mr. Churchill was portrayed—dressed in a British Army uniform and smoking a long cigar—together with Foster Dulles, Tito, Franco and General de Gaulle, and all of them were spurring flames from their mouths. Temporarily they were portrayed as having a riotous time, but ultimately they were locked in prison by the defenders of peace, whilst white doves circled above, and the audience cheered and clapped.

But as a teacher, I naturally wanted to know what Russian children were taught about us. We found that *Robinson Crusoe*, Shakespeare's plays, the novels of Dickens and the poems of Byron were all popular. It was significant that in history they studied Wat Tyler, the Chartist, our Industrial Revolution, Darwin, and the part played by Britain in the two world wars. We were astonished to find that a certain John Bellers was held to be of such importance that he too was included in their syllabus. Alas, I had to confess my ignorance, for I had never heard of him. Nor had my two colleagues. But on enquiry we found he was a seventeenth-century philanthropist whose writings later influenced Robert Owen and Marx and who had used the words: 'If a man will not work, neither shall he eat'. In fact the Russians are giving John Bellers the credit for words that are only literally his, for they are clearly derived from the better known sentence in the Epistle to the Thessalonians—'If any would not work, neither should he eat'.

—Home Service

## Eurydice

And she was there. The little boat  
Coasting the perilous isles of sleep,  
Zones of oblivion and despair,  
Stopped, for Eurydice was there.  
The foundering skiff could scarcely keep  
All that felicity afloat.

As if we had passed earth's frontier wood  
Long since and from this sea had won  
The lost original of the soul,  
The moment gave us clear and whole  
Each back to each and swept us on  
Past every choice to boundless good.

Forgiveness, truth, atonement, all  
Our love at once—till we could dare  
To turn our heads at last and see  
The poor ghost of Eurydice  
Still sitting on her silver chair  
Alone in Hades' empty hall.

EDWIN MUIR



# The Listener

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## The Fusionist?

THERE are two sorts of bright young men. The first are those whom we may all claim to admire: the men whom fate has placed in difficult circumstances and who determine to make good by their own unremitting exertions. In the world of art and knowledge they achieve distinction by study, by the reading of great authors, by gruelling hard work and practice. The second class is the revolutionary. Angry with schools and academies, with established forms and principles, he decides to dedicate his life to founding a new political party or religion or discover a new departure in the arts. It was to the second class that Claude Debussy belonged. In the late nineteenth century artistic revolution was in the air. In England there were Ruskin, Turner, Wilde, but above all revolutionaries forgathered in France. Their approaches varied: some were scientific (or thought they were), some were anti-scientific, but all were anti-academic and wanted to realise something new or attain a novel synthesis.

Debussy, to whose work much of the Third Programme is devoted this week, was, as Mr. Martin Cooper explained in our columns, a master experimentalist. After a distinguished beginning to his career as a composer he went to Russia and was influenced by gipsy music and the music of Borodin; in Rome he encountered the Pre-Raphaelite influence; and in the end he 'capitulated to Wagner'. But above all he was affected by the work and conversation of the impressionist painters and symbolist poets who were his contemporaries in Paris. In 1890 he produced five 'settings' to Baudelaire and his famous 'Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune' was intended as a 'musical decor' for a poem by Mallarmé: when 'Pelléas et Mélisande' was first performed in Paris in 1902 the Secretary of the Conservatoire is said to have exclaimed '*C'est du Claude Monet*', which Debussy took as a compliment. How far he succeeded in his attempted synthesis or correspondence between the arts is a delicate question. Writing in *Radio Times* Mr. Edward Lockspeiser observes:

Indeed, the musical equivalent which Debussy attempted to discover of the symbols that suggest themselves to the mind of the poet, or the impressions that crowd into the vision of the painter—all those literary or pictorial evocations in his imaginative art offer many different interpretations, and must necessarily continue to do so.

Some people would no doubt argue (as Dr. A. G. Lehmann appears to do) that an attempt to translate poetry or painting into terms of music must necessarily be a failure; that to try to produce images by means of music is to employ an evocative technique which has nothing to do with pure art. Thus critics of Wagner have condemned him for dressing up ideas in the Germans' minds which made them march to destruction in two world wars. And certainly when reacting against naturalism or realism Debussy's friends and contemporaries frequently fell into romantic excesses.

Of course it can be argued that it is often damaging to a great artist to dwell over much on the influences on and origins of his works. Do we need to know about Ruskin's love affairs before studying his prose or that Beethoven originally dedicated the Third Symphony to Napoleon? 'How much more human and moving', writes Mr. Lockspeiser, 'does the infinitely varied Debussyan art appear once its purely period appeal has receded into history!' Does the delicacy, the graciousness, the civilised character of Debussy's art need any *hors-d'oeuvres*? We live, as Mr. E. H. Carr has recently reminded us, in an age obsessed by history. A knowledge of the background—yes, one supposes, we must always have that—but it must remain background lest it pervert our judgments.

## What They Are Saying

More broadcasts on the Anglo-Persian dispute

THE SITUATION IN PERSIA continued to take priority in world broadcasts last week. While western commentators expressed the hope that the dispute would be settled amicably, Persian broadcasts were showing no signs of willingness to negotiate. One broadcast from Teheran radio alleged that the 1933 agreement 'was concluded in an atmosphere of terror and suppression under the shadow of British warships and various threats'. The broadcast went on:

Our national soul and our people's consent had no part in the conclusion of this agreement. Hence it is legally invalid. . . . In nationalising the oil industry we have merely followed the Labour Government's own nationalisation measures in Britain. Moreover, nationalisation is an accomplished fact; the British Government's efforts will be of no avail.

On May 24 Teheran radio reported that the Persian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had officially denied reports that the Soviet Government had informed the Persian Government of its intention to send troops into north Persia in the event of British troops landing in the south, and that Persia had agreed to this. Meanwhile, broadcasts from Persia's neighbours were very verbose on the question. Damascus radio quoted a statement attributed to Sayid Kashani at a press conference on May 23, demanding the nationalisation of the oil resources in Bahrein, and saying that Persia welcomed the assistance of neighbouring countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan 'and even Russia, if this assistance does not constitute a danger to Persia'. Beirut radio on May 22 quoted a speech by Muzaffer Baghai at demonstrations in Teheran, saying that 'the landing of a single British parachutist or soldier in Persia will arouse all the Moslem peoples of Asia'. Broadcasts from the so-called 'Azerbaijan Democratic' station continued to be virulently anti-British and anti-American, and also attacked the Shah of Persia as 'the enemy of freedom and democracy'.

While this station declared that 'the Washington and London plunderers are partners in the oil robbery', broadcasts from Moscow and eastern Europe took the line that 'the imperialists are quarrelling over Persia's oil', since the American monopolists were seeking 'to oust the British' and secure the oil for themselves. A Moscow broadcast addressed to Persian listeners claimed that Mr. Morrison had 'openly stated that the American Government is pursuing a dual policy' in connection with Persian oil. The final word, concluded the broadcast, would rest with the Persian nation. Moscow radio, for the most part, ignored recent developments in the dispute.

A broadcast from Turkey pointed out that any intervention by British troops would lead to Soviet intervention in the north; and that unless matters were settled reasonably, the only party to benefit would be the communist world as a whole. On the other hand, a broadcast from Helsinki, quoting a Finnish Unionist newspaper, remarked that if the U.S.S.R. refrained from sending troops to north Persia in the event of British intervention, she would achieve an extremely good propaganda weapon. The Independent left-wing *Franc Tireur*, quoted by Paris radio, expressed the opinion that British military intervention would not only cause London to be accused of aggression at the United Nations, but would also bring into play the Soviet-Persian Treaty.

Here is a comment on the Festival of Britain by *Pravda's* London correspondent, broadcast by Moscow radio:

Correspondent Mayevsky, giving his impression of a visit to the British so-called Festival, points out that it represents a kind of propaganda-commercial venture of the Labour Government. By making a cheap hue and cry about the 'love of peace' of the ruling circles of Britain, the organisers of the Festival are endeavouring to conceal the delirious preparation for an aggressive war and to confuse the popular masses. The first thing that strikes one when one visits the Festival is the aspiration of its builders to leave the traditions of British national architecture. Everything is deliberately chaotic, everything is loud and obviously intended to please the tastes of trans-oceanic admirers of 'things modern'. . . . What is shown at the main exhibition cannot in any way serve as a testimony of great technical progress. Many machines are considerably inferior to produce manufactured in other countries. . . . The commercial nature of the Festival is vividly reflected in the so-called Fun Fair. The greater part of the 'amusements' have nothing in common with sensible relaxation. The showy frills of the Festival not only fail to disguise the steadily deteriorating condition of the masses in Britain, but on the contrary sharply underline it. . . . Visitors to the Festival have hardly left its precincts when they see American soldiers marching along the streets of London.



# Did You Hear That?

## THE RESTORED HOUSE OF LORDS

THE HOUSE OF LORDS has returned to its old Chamber, which has now been renovated since its occupation by the Commons. 'I sat in the gallery of this Lords' Chamber all through the last Parliament, when it was occupied by the House of Commons', said E. R. THOMPSON, the B.B.C. Parliamentary Correspondent, in a Home Service talk, 'and I gained over the years a certain affection for it. It was big, melancholy, shabby; but it had a Victorian dignity that could not be denied. When the fog got into it, as it did on occasion, it was positively Dickensian. But, never having seen it in its pre-war glory, I had no inkling of the splendour that awaited me when I returned to see it; for the innumerable experts and craftsmen, who had been working intensively on it since the Commons went back to their own home last autumn, have really made a magical transformation. The whole thing blazes and glows with colour and golden ornament. That is the first—and the most powerful—impression. It is a marvel of detail too, of course; all Pugin's work is. But it is this tremendous total effect of regal splendour that carries you away.

'Where does it come from? Undoubtedly, the great centre of golden glitter is provided by the royal thrones. These are placed on a dais at the south end of the chamber, against a reredos, and protected by railings, and everything—the thrones, the reredos, the railings and the canopies—are either gilt or polished brass. The effect is only comparable, in its richness and its heraldic extravagance, to the sanctuary of some chapel, dedicated to one of the orders of chivalry. The regilding that has been done here deserves a special word. It is so discreet.

The effect is brilliant. But yet there is no sense of staring newness.

'From this superb end-piece, flanked by two enormous standard brass candelabra, each weighing half a ton, the eye travels over the scarlet-upholstered Woolsack and the scarlet benches. The Woolsack, of course, is another of the great features of this House. I tried it myself and it seemed to me, in spite of its queer shape, remarkably comfortable; this has been restored, unchanged. But the benches themselves are new; they have slightly taller backs than the old ones, and they accommodate only 230 peers—a number judged sufficient, without making the debating floor too vast.

'Immense care had been lavished on the detail. The innumerable inscriptions carved in wood and stone have been cleaned and restored everywhere. The lighting has been attended to, without interfering with the original hanging chandeliers. There is a new system of sound amplification. The wall-paintings at either end have been restored and recoloured with loving care; so that we can now see, without any mistake whatever, "The Baptism of St. Ethelbert", "Prince Henry Acknowledging the Authority of Judge Gascoigne", and the rest. This will be a feast for the connoisseur of Victorian ornament, as well as for the lover of parliamentary pageantry. And it will serve as a permanent reminder that, in our constitution, this is the true heart of Parliament;

for it is the one place where King, Lords and Commons can all be seen together, at the ceremonial opening of each session'.

## 'SERVED ON A ROUND PLATE'

'The good American salesman never lets up', observed JAMES OTTAWAY in 'Woman's Hour'. 'Even when he has sold you something he wants to make sure you are happy and appreciate it. Last winter,

one time, I felt a bit of a cold coming on, or at least threatening, so I bought one of those inhaler things that you put up your nose and sniff. In the instructions on the wrapper of the American model I found these words: "Insert gently into the nostril so that it fits snugly, then draw a deep breath."

'Let me quote one or two persuasive whispers from the menu of a popular Broadway restaurant. On the cover under a picture of a herd of cattle is this gladdening message: "Thousands and thousands of the finest cattle are now grazing contentedly on the farms of Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin preparatory to being elected for Blank's restaurant where they will be served in choice steaks, stews, roasts, etc.—All of this to bring happiness to you".

'You would like to start with oysters? This is what the menu says: "Oysters (government inspected and fresh). Just yesterday at the break of dawn glad was their heart as they joyfully played deep in the water of Gardiner Bay. Today they are here . . . succulent, fresh and delicious for you to enjoy. 55 cents the half dozen". Then ham and sweet potatoes. You will find "our luscious hams are all from healthy Wisconsin porkers, raised by the farmer's wife on the green meadows and fed the best in the land, milk, corn and acorn to

give the meat that extra flavour which makes our hams so distinctive —\$1.25".

'No dish can be left without some adjective to commend it. French fried potatoes are all right as they have their own, but "mashed" cannot be left unqualified. So there appears "fluffy mashed potatoes". There is also "mellow coffee" and "rich flavoury milk". But my special favourite was "Spaghetti with meat balls" which was described as "Served on a round plate with rich meat sauce and grated parmesan cheese—\$1.00". The round plate slayed me. Perhaps one day I shall see advertised in a New York bar "Beer served in a cylindrical glass—15 cents".

## THE CHINA CLAY INDUSTRY

Speaking of the China clay industry in Cornwall and South Devon, ROBERT DOUGLAS BROWN explained in a West of England Home Service talk that 'the biggest users are the paper mills, for it would be a poor sort of paper that lacked china clay—the pages in an ordinary book are at least one-fifth clay. Altogether, paper-making takes half the clay extracted in Cornwall and Devon, the potteries another quarter, and the remainder is shared among many smaller users. There is



The restored chamber of the House of Lords, from the Press Gallery



china clay in the felt with which you roof your chicken house, and in some of the medicines you take when you are off colour; it is in cement and in cosmetics, in rubber and in paint, in textiles and in leather; it is needed to make insecticides and for arc-welding. And every year scientists find new uses for it, and new qualities of clay are developed to meet the need.

'There are no other workable deposits of china clay in Britain than those in the south-west—and not many anywhere else in the world either. Demand far exceeds supply and Cornwall and Devon can reasonably look forward to a busy and prosperous future. The china clay still available there will provide 1,000,000 tons a year for at least another century, so there is no need to worry on that score. St. Austell is the centre of the industry. In an area of about thirty square miles just north-west of the town there are about 100 pits, though not more than a third of them are working now, for there is concentration on the most productive ones. There are two pits on Bodmin Moor and, on the other side of the Tamar, one of the biggest and most modern in the world at Lee Moor, on the fringe of Dartmoor.

'In the early days local families started many small businesses to extract and sell the china clay. But between the two world wars the structure of the industry changed completely, with three-quarters of the total output coming under the control of a single group of companies. That development resulted in a big research and experimental programme that has been the basis of most of the achievement of the last few years. A hundred years ago, when the great days of expansion were just beginning, Cornwall and Devon produced 50,000 or 60,000 tons of China clay a year. In twenty-five years after that production increased three-fold, and, by 1900, ten-fold—to well over 500,000 tons a year. And so the industry went on expanding to the impressive total of over 835,000 tons in 1914—a figure only twice exceeded since—with three-quarters of it going overseas'.

After mentioning the post war difficulties, Mr. Brown continued: 'In the autumn of 1945, the Government appointed a Working Committee to investigate how the industry could best get on to its feet again. And, when that Committee had reported, a Working Party was appointed to draft a long-term policy for the industry. From the Working Party recommendations there has resulted a new China Clay Council, representing employers and workers and with two independent members, which is just beginning to function as an advisory body. At the moment it is tackling the difficult matter of housing in the area, for more houses would mean more workers.

'By 1946 token shipments of china clay were going to a score of countries. Three hundred German prisoners of war were at work in the pits, while the area for twenty-five or thirty miles around was combed for men. In time the Germans were sent home and their places had to be filled, but by an all-out effort the industry steadily built up again and now it is employing about 3,500. There is still a shortage, though; probably 300 more men could be taken on in the immediate future and the Working Party estimated that the permanent labour force will need to be about 4,000. One particular post-war difficulty has been the recruitment of youths. In 1938 one in every ten workers in the industry was under eighteen, now it is only one in every twenty'.

## WITH THE ZAPOTEC INDIANS

JOHN SKEAPING related in a Home Service broadcast how he became friends with and lived with the Zapotec Indians in Mexico. 'I shared', he said, 'their frugal diet of maize pancakes called "tortillas", an occasional egg, and roasted grasshoppers. I used to take them to market in my car and help them sell their pots, water bottles, little whistles in the form of animals and birds and the musical instruments, all of

which they made in black clay, a speciality of this village. The method of turning the clay black is a secret only known to these people.

'One day while we were digging in the garden, we unearthed a Zapotec kiln of the fourth century. It was full of pots identical to those we had been making that very day, evidence beyond doubt that there had been a pottery on that very site for the past 1,600 years. During all this time the Indians have changed very little. They retain most of their ancient beliefs and are highly superstitious. One of the things which impressed me most about them was that they possess second sight. A friend of mine who had been visiting me and had come to the village on several occasions returned to Mexico. A month later an Indian girl whom I knew told me to get into touch

with her, saying that she was ill. I asked her who had told her so. "Nobody", she said. "It came out of my mother's head last night". That evening I telephoned Mexico City; my friend's sister answered telling me that she had gone into the hospital two days before. The week before I left Mexico this same Indian girl was going with me around the village to say goodbye to people I knew; amongst others she pointed to two children saying: "Say good-bye to them for they will be dead when you return to Mexico in six years time". She told me who would be dead and who would be alive by the time I returned again.

'Another thing that impressed me was their absolute sense of direction, like homing pigeons. An Indian fifteen-year-old boy who lived with me for a year had been a cattle drover from the age of eight driving animals from Oaxaca market, through a hundred miles of trackless forest and mountain, to a place called Notchislan. When I asked him how he found his way there the first time he said, "I knew where it was". You could in fact take any

of these people blindfold, set them down in the middle of the jungle and they would find their way home without difficulty. The journey took three days and nights through forests full of leopards and other wild animals. At night the boy would tie one of the bullocks to the tree in which he slept to be out of the way of poisonous snakes and insects. The other bullocks would stay around the tethered one. Should a leopard or puma come to attack the cattle the one tied to the tree would shake it in its struggles to escape and wake the boy up. He would then light a rocket charged with dynamite and throw it horizontally in the direction of the leopard; the thing would go off with a thunderous explosion and a blinding flash and scare the animal away.

'The Mexican Indians have little regard for life or death. If they are your friends they are to be trusted absolutely; if they are not then you had better watch out for yourself. They may take an instant dislike to someone. This was the case with a woman staying in my house. An Indian girl coming to bring me some things one morning caught sight of this woman through the glass of the door. She called me to come outside. When I asked her to come in she said that she would not as the woman inside the house had the evil eye and had been responsible for killing a child in the village. There was nothing for it but to tell the woman, who wisely left the house the next day'.

## GOOD FORM

DR. WILHELM VIOLA, talking in the Midland Home Service, said: 'I read in a Paris newspaper which published a guide for French visitors to the Festival of Britain: "Don't speak of yourself", but "It is good form to tell stories which make you appear ridiculous". A Canon in Yorkshire, whose guest I was, told me the following story: "I visited a near-by town and preached there. The next day I asked a man whom I knew and who was present, how he had liked my sermon. The man answered: "I brought Mr. Cooper to hear you. He says he ain't coming again"'.



China clay being hand-rolled at Pentewan, Cornwall



## The Reawakening of Asia—II

## Totalitarianism and the New China

By MICHAEL LINDSAY

EVERY revolution is to some extent a product of pre-revolutionary society, and the Chinese revolution started from what might be described as a very successful totalitarian society. For more than 1,000 years the real ruling group in China was the bureaucracy, recruited through the imperial civil service examinations. It is true that a high proportion of officials came from landlord families and that local administration was left very largely in the hands of the local gentry, but power based on land never challenged power based on position in the government. Primogeniture was abolished very early in Chinese history so that power based on land ownership tended to run down through division at each generation.

## A Non-Hereditary Bureaucracy

This dominance of a non-hereditary bureaucracy has been plausibly explained on Marxist lines, but its extraordinary stability depended very largely on another totalitarian feature, the enforcement of a single official ideology. The whole of Chinese education was bound up with the imperial examination system which demanded an intimate knowledge of the Chinese classics. In all sorts of ways the institutions of Chinese society were designed to maintain the prestige of the traditional classical learning. For example, in Chinese villages one can still sometimes see a thing like a letter box with the inscription, 'Respect the written word'. The idea being that anything with writing on it should not be left lying about to be trampled on. This prestige was so well established that it survived a long time without government support. In the nineteen-forties the communists tried a policy of allowing the village council to choose the curriculum for the village school. In a number of villages the people still wanted to teach the traditional elementary classics, a full generation after the last imperial civil service examinations which alone gave this type of education practical usefulness.

Just because the ideology was so well established violent enforcement was much less in evidence than in modern totalitarian states where rival ideologies still exist. As one modern writer puts it, 'Every educated man was either a government official or expected to become one. There was no hostile scholar class, no break with the tradition'. This meant that a revolutionary situation did not produce a revolution. At intervals in Chinese history government would become too oppressive or too incompetent—usually both. The order of Chinese society would collapse with peasant revolts, barbarian invasions or dynastic wars. But when the period of confusion was over the old scholar officials were still on top. The revolutionary forces never had the theoretical basis or the leadership to set up a new system.

If China had remained isolated this might have gone on indefinitely. By the early nineteenth century the Manchu dynasty was showing signs of collapse. From analogy with previous history one might have expected a period of confusion followed by the establishment of a new dynasty. It was this analogy which President Yuan Shih-k'ai tried to follow in 1916 when he proclaimed himself emperor; but it did not work because of the new forces introduced by the west.

I will not try to evaluate the achievements of the old Chinese society, which in some ways were very great. What is relevant here is that, because it was totalitarian, it had very limited powers of progress and adaptation. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century European travellers usually thought that China was more civilised than Europe. But when close contact actually came in the nineteenth century the Chinese ruling class faced a totally new problem, namely contact with a different culture which was definitely superior in technology and organisation. The scholar officials who had been conditioned to think about every problem in terms supplied by the Chinese classics now had to deal with things which just did not fit this frame of reference.

In Japan, where power depended on property or on feudal loyalty, sections of the ruling class could take over and use western ideas and methods without endangering their position. In China, where power depended so much on an established ideology, it was hard for the ruling group to take over western ideas without destroying the basis

of its power. In the last years of the empire, foreign degrees were admitted as equivalent to Chinese degrees, but the experiment only showed that there was no possible synthesis between the ideas of a Hanlin scholar and the ideas of a man with western technical training.

On the other side, western ideas gave new strength to revolutionary movements. Western ideas transformed the T'ai-p'ing rebellion from a normal peasant revolt to a revolution which nearly succeeded. Its suppression, with western assistance, gave the old regime another half-century of life. But it was a half-century in which China's problems steadily got worse. China faced steadily increasing pressure from westernised nations and it became more and more clear that this pressure could only be resisted by westernisation in China. As a result leadership passed to people with western training. A large proportion of the Kuomintang leaders came from families which had been fairly poor at the end of the nineteenth century and had therefore sent their children to missionary schools instead of giving them the regular classical education.

One of the major successes of early Soviet diplomacy came from the recognition of this trend and the consequent decision to back Sun Yat-sen. The Western Powers tended to be impressed by the obvious strength of the northern war lords as compared with Sun Yat-sen's precarious hold on Canton. When Sun tried to get help from the west, people were repelled by the confusion of his detailed practical plans. The Russians alone saw that Sun Yat-sen was the potential leader of a movement which could conquer all China. The reorganised Canton Government with Russian advisers changed the whole balance of power in China by organising the masses. Politically indoctrinated armies, backed by peasant organisations and trade unions, easily defeated the old war lords. But after Sun Yat-sen's death the movement became an uneasy coalition between those who wanted primarily a nationalist revolution and those who wanted to go on to a social revolution. Many Kuomintang leaders, including Chiang Kai-shek, believed that the traditional Chinese social philosophy was superior to anything the west had to offer. They wanted China to follow the same sort of path as Japan, to take over western technology and organisation and use them to make China a Great Power, but to use them always in the service of social ideals determined by the Chinese and not by the western tradition. At the other extreme, the communists wished to remodel Chinese society according to their western philosophy. This struggle dominated Chinese politics for the next quarter-century.

## Failure of the Kuomintang

The first round was won decisively by the nationalists, largely because the communists were under Comintern leadership. Chiang Kai-shek based his policy on a shrewd direct appreciation of the Chinese situation. Communist policy got mixed up with the Stalin-Trotsky struggle in Russia where both sides assumed that Marx-Leninism was so exact a science that the Chinese revolution could be directed from Moscow through agents with no special knowledge of China. Why did the Kuomintang end with such ignominious failure after this initial success? A large part of the answer was given by one of the Kuomintang leaders when he said, 'It is more important to prevent injustice by the weak against the strong than injustice by the strong against the weak. Injustice by the strong against the weak is only injustice; injustice by the weak against the strong also subverts the order of society'. Everybody knew that the survival of the Kuomintang Government and its ability to resist renewed communist pressure depended on putting through various essential reforms, and in theory the Kuomintang was all for reforms and modernisation. But measures were never pushed to the point where they might subvert the order of society. The weak were never given any powers which they might have used to be unjust to the strong. For a time there was genuine though slow progress, but after 1939 the progressive forces in the Kuomintang became weaker and the whole system degenerated into a hopeless tangle of vested interests. A complicating factor was the personal tragedy of Chiang Kai-shek's position. With immense determination he worked for an



impossible social ideal. What he wanted was an idealised version of the old Chinese society which would be both honest and efficient and also paternalistic and authoritarian. But the men who could govern honestly and efficiently were too deeply influenced by western ideas. Chiang always faced the choice between using men who could govern well but who did not share his social ideals and using men who were crooked or incompetent but personally loyal to him. He would often appoint honest and competent men, but when the inevitable conflicts arose he would never back them against the personally loyal crooks.

The communists won because they had developed the ability to act according to the demands of the real situation (which is something very different from acting according to what Marx-Leninist theory says the situation ought to be). This ability can be explained as the product of an environment in which the communists had administrative responsibility under conditions of guerrilla warfare. For almost the whole period between 1927 and 1947 the inhabitants of any communist area could exchange communist rule for Kuomintang or Japanese rule, not by opposing the communists, but simply by ceasing to give them active support. A communist official who refused to base his policy on what the peasants actually wanted, regardless of what his theory said they ought to want, had a very short expectation of life. The result was to produce a very marked difference in attitude between communists with experience in the guerrilla areas and the much more doctrinaire communists without this experience.

### Shift of Power in the Village

The communists were not hampered by the same inhibitions as the Kuomintang. In the Kuomintang organisation, General Barr of the Joint United States Military Advisory Group complained, 'No man, no matter how efficient, can hope for a position of authority on account of being the man best qualified for the job . . .'. In the communist set-up, responsible jobs were normally given to competent men and in the most important organisations the level of efficiency was high, even by western standards. Kuomintang reforms were nearly always nullified at the village level, except in a few model areas, because local armed power was in the hands of the vested interests who would be hurt by the reforms. The communists were not afraid of the masses and produced a real shift of power at the village level by replacing the old gendarmerie and *min t'uan* by a village militia which in some areas became sufficiently effective to defeat Kuomintang regular troops. After this shift of power in the village, land reform or taxation reform became possible. The general Chinese acceptance of the communist rise to power has come from the communist ability to get things done, many of them quite obvious things with no necessary relation to communism. This has rallied behind communism not only nationalist sentiment but also a mass of opinion which really wishes to serve the people but was completely frustrated under the Kuomintang.

On the official Chinese view, nothing but the danger of foreign invasion threatens the development of Chinese society on democratic and scientific lines. But looking at it another way, Chinese society still faces a decisive choice between development towards democracy and the use of western scientific methods and retrogression towards something very like the traditional Confucian system. Consider the main features of the old Confucian system: first, power and economic privilege based on position in an official hierarchy rather than on property; secondly, the dominance and cohesion of this ruling hierarchy secured by the enforcement of an official ideology. These are exactly the features which characterise the Stalinist development of communism, and the parallel between Confucianism and orthodox communism is close.

If the Chinese take Russia as a model China may well develop something very like the old Confucian system with the Communist Party in the place of the scholar officials and Marxism instead of Confucianism as the official ideology. The revolution would then have ended where it started except for a higher level of technology and, quite probably, a lower level of art. One can even see the beginnings of a movement in this direction. The enforcement of a single ideology is in full swing. There are the beginnings of the old reverence for official titles and some publications have gone as far as to print Mao Tse-tung's name in the special way that used to be reserved for the name of the emperor. Economic privilege for the official hierarchy is still much less than in Russia or the old China, but even here there are beginnings, such as special schools for the children of higher *cadres*.

Everyone in the communist organisation would indignantly repudiate the very idea of such a development. But it may happen precisely because people do not admit its possibility. Tendencies become inevitable

laws when people do not understand and allow for them. When people think, as communists do, in terms of a theory which relates class privilege and exploitation entirely to property, it is hard for them even to perceive the growth of an exploiting and ruling group whose power is not based on property but on status, especially if they themselves belong to the group that is becoming privileged. Even if they perceive that something is going wrong it is very hard for them to formulate their opposition or to suggest remedies when they have no theoretical concepts to describe or discuss what they perceive.

Last week, Professor Toynbee described the east taking over western science both to repel the pressure of the west and also to realise the possibility of a civilisation not based on exploitation. The Chinese revolution illustrates this process but it also shows western science being taken over with an essential factor missing. The achievements of western science have come from the combination of two things: first, a faith that nature is orderly and that there are no definable limits to the extent to which it can be understood and controlled by the human mind through the combination of experiment and reasoning; secondly, a humility about the degree of understanding attainable by any actual human mind. A good illustration is Newton's famous saying that in his work he was only like a small boy playing with the more curious pebbles and shells on a beach while the whole ocean of truth lay undiscovered before him. It is this second element of humility in science that China has tended to miss.

The case against totalitarianism really turns on the nature of scientific knowledge. If it is assumed that a system of final and absolutely certain truths is known, then it is perfectly logical to believe that society should be organised so as to secure the general acceptance of these truths. The choice between using force or using persuasion is purely a matter of expediency. But western science has developed from the belief that all generalisations about the real world must be subject to possible modification to fit new evidence, that it is not possible to lay down a system of absolutely certain final truths. A society which has enforced the unquestioned acceptance of any single ideology has cut off certain possibilities of progress and rendered certain problems insoluble.

Again, the arguments for 'democratic centralism' depend on the assumption that it is always possible to reach a definite decision between the merits of different possible policies. But even in natural science it is common for long periods to elapse before evidence is found to give a decisive verdict between rival hypotheses. The wisest organisation must therefore make some mistakes. If it works on 'democratic centralism' it cannot correct them until the consequences of any mistake become so glaring that reconsideration cannot be avoided. Now in China both the Kuomintang and the communists have based their organisation on 'democratic centralism'. Both the communists and the dominant group in the Kuomintang tried to enforce an official ideology. Either explicitly or in practice, both accepted the principle of 'political tutelage', that a self-appointed elite should govern until the masses are educated for democracy.

### The Present Problem

In a country such as China is now, some sort of political tutelage is almost inevitable. It is very improbable that the institutions of representative democracy would produce a satisfactory government. The problem is how to ensure that political tutelage will develop towards democracy and not degenerate into the rule of an exploiting dominant minority. If the *élite* hold a totalitarian philosophy, degeneration is much more likely than development. On totalitarian assumptions, free discussion and effective control of the government by the people are luxuries which only a very stable and prosperous society can afford.

But suppose people start asking certain questions such as, 'Does experience support the communist—and Confucian—assumption that properly educated rulers can be trusted never to abuse their power?' or, 'How can the policies of the ruling party be kept in line with the interests of the masses?' If people once start thinking scientifically about such questions they will be driven to the conclusion that free discussion and popular control of government are not luxuries but necessities which any society neglects only at imminent peril of degeneration. If the enforcement of a new uniform ideology prevents people from thinking scientifically they will be unable to prevent the degeneration of Chinese society into what Milovan Djilas calls 'bureaucratic centralism', because they will not be able to understand what is happening. A static China will again face a progressing west.

—From a talk in the Third Programme



# Two Indefinables: Symbolism and Impressionism

By A. G. LEHMANN

**S**YMBOLISM, the word, came to celebrity in Paris between the years 1885 and 1890. Within twenty years it was all over Europe in one or another derivative form. The heritage of symbolism has had a longer run for its money than most other tendencies in the literature of recent times: it becomes hard to disengage it from the general run of writing—words like 'cubism' or 'surrealism' are easier to deal with because they stand for less and in that less mean more.

All these big terms in literary criticism or history are part of a process by which we condense or simplify in order to discuss the past or the present without being interminable. The origins of some of them, and 'symbolism' is one in point, when we look a little closely are apt to be disconcerting: at a remove of half a century they afford

us a unity which is plainly artificial and yet somehow imposed on us by lines of force—even when the lines of force were hardly recognised by the individuals about whom in the last resort we are always talking. All the same, when a little spark of a word, invented in a corner for a quite limited and reasonable purpose, catches on and spreads like fire through all sorts of different scenes, there is reason to take it seriously, while apologising for its vagueness. No fire without smoke, of course—in the closing years of the

partly on the enthusiasm of relatively few people for the legends displayed in Wagnerian music-drama; largely, on a distaste for Zola, the naturalist novel, realism on the stage, and in general the tyranny of exact representation. Hunting for definitions is therefore like counting beards on the *boulevard*—an endless game.

But from these controversies there arose a number of curious developments. Almost every self-styled symbolist, or at any rate member of the half-dozen

or so groups of writers that we can embrace in a large use of that term, professed a deep love of music: not merely for its own sake—because there was in fact no serious musician among them—but as in some way an example to poetry. Verlaine with his *Art Poétique* gave the best remembered expression to this nostalgia; for him, music was above all vague, allusive, vaporous even, and the music of poetry was a quality, a flexible caressing rhythm, a fluidity of line, dear to him personally but not of course a constitutive principle of all poetry. To others, more ambitious, music was a language free from all clear reference, therefore of ideally universal significance: if poetry could acquire some of its suggestive mystery, by whatever means, then the gates of ivory and horn would open, and the visionary at last escape from the realm of crude transactions of commerce into the island of lucid vision, the garden of Platonic Ideas perhaps. For others again, the more extravagant and now the least remembered, music was above all a range of orchestral sonorities: so intoxicating, that an analogy must surely

exist between the timbres of different groups of instruments and the different phonetic elements of speech. 1886 saw the rise of an 'Instrumentist' school wedded to the idea of scientifically planning the emotional force of poetry; this was to be done by drawing up rules for the succession of word sounds, fancifully called after the different groups of instruments in an orchestra.

But by far the most impressive of the writers of the poetic *avant-garde* was Stéphane Mallarmé; and for him at least, the lesson which music had to teach was one we can hardly dismiss lightly. Mallarmé conceived the special interest of music to lie in the fact that it was an art concerned only to elaborate its internal relations, expressive, certainly, but not informative. What it said was how it said it. Poetry aspired, at the



Self-portrait, by Edouard Manet (1878)



Claude Debussy (1884), by Marcel Baschet

last century 'symbolism' had popularly a nasty taint of *fumisterie*; but the smoke has since cleared.

The thing that most occupied young poets of the *Rive Gauche* in the 'eighties and 'nineties, was precisely what was to be understood by the word 'symbol'—and what was its status in poetry, in drama, what special values it conferred, and what were the limits of its use. I think it worth remarking that of the four poets whom we best remember from that age—Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Laforgue—three never used symbols in any form that common sense would recognise; while Mallarmé, who did, escaped having their intention detected until long after his death in 1897. Partly, the controversy rested on a variety of aesthetic mysticisms;



Stéphane Mallarmé (1876), by Manet



limit, to the condition of music, but only in this one sense: the condition was not one that could be prescribed for, but the result of pure technical mastery of words. What he called 'musicality', we should call perfection. He elaborated and embroidered this view in a lecture which he gave in Oxford and Cambridge in 1893; but the evidence suggests that his manner of delivery and the sphynxian style of his discourse left most of his hearers without a very clear notion what he meant.

### Concern with the Problems of Language

Behind this diversity of attitudes to music—and a few more still could be added—there is something common to all these poets—the flamboyant Moréas, the retiring Laforgue, the sybilline Mallarmé, and a hundred others. Although it appears at first sight not to be immediately connected with the fascination of music for them, I believe it to be pertinent. To put the matter briefly, their concern is with the problems of material, of language. All their poetry, and a great quantity of their prose—critical, dramatic, even their novels in a few cases—are sustained experiment. On the one hand their view of what is fit matter for poetry puts them, beyond the hope of appeal, in the last century; but that is less than half of an untidy story. On the other hand, they sought out for their exquisite experiences new forms, new imagery, a huge range of new vocabulary—archaisms, neologisms, monstrosities too—precious obscurantism, some hoaxes, and the rest. If their sense of syntax and balance was weak, it had to be so, while they undertook to bring *vers libre* into the French language—a far more hazardous operation for them than for their counterparts in England or Germany.

All this searching for means to capture fugitive sensations, to tame the absolute or strip the unconscious, led them to problems of language not previously encountered, though since become familiar. And in the heat of argument and portentous theorising, it became plain that existing theories and preconceptions about language were far too narrow—the nineteenth century was living on the acquisitions of the eighteenth. They resented the intellectualist account of meaning, and they rejected the ethical account of literary value; and having access to less respectable traditions, they proceeded to overset, or at any rate damage, distinctions that dated from the time of Lessing and Diderot.

Among these distinctions were some which kept each art more or less to itself, harmlessly. The symbolists noticed, or recalled, that Baudelaire, pursuing a lonely and in fact unusual Swedenborgian mysticism, largely of his own compounding, had written of the world as a temple of living symbols, where colours, perfumes, sounds, all have their mysterious meanings and equivalencies with one another. And Baudelaire had drawn attention to the fact that these properties seem to be illustrated by Wagner's music-dramas: at any event, 'Tannhäuser' and 'Lohengrin'. This led the symbolists to consider the possibility of qualifying a given musical note, say C sharp on the oboe, as 'pearl-grey'; they called it a symbol, and were greatly taken with the extension this would give to the resources of metaphor, if one could be sure of such qualifications being understood. But even if they were not, where would be the harm in that? There was still the comforting possibility that unappreciative readers were congenitally unfitted to follow them in their insights. The discovery of Rimbaud, which took place belatedly in 1886, brought them upon the famous 'Sonnet des Voyelles', written more than a dozen years before, in which he attributed to each of the five vowels its own distinctive colour and emotional associations. Some complained gravely that Rimbaud had committed a solecism by not adhering to primary colours; others held the poem to be a simple intuition of the mystical unity of all things; while others, again, argued it to be a statement of scientific fact, grounded in the physiology of auditory and visual sensation, all perfectly well known to science.

One might mention here that Rimbaud was himself probably innocent of any such systematic intention in this fantasy; the genesis of the sonnet is to be looked for in quite other directions. Though the general problem went on being argued until quite recent times, it soon ceased to tempt literature by any possibility of practical advance; whatever its causes, 'synaesthesia' (as it came to be called) had served its purpose when it escorted a new range of metaphoric liberties into being, and underlined a vague sentiment that all arts are, in some indefinable manner, on the same footing.

It was in this spirit that the music-dramas of Richard Wagner were approached. Though none of these was staged in the 'eighties, and the enthusiast had to content himself with excerpts played at concerts,

unless, like Villiers de L'Isle Adam, he cared to make the pilgrimage to Bayreuth, nevertheless Wagner's prestige was enormous; and his own writings on art did not require too vast an amount of alteration to conform with the ambitions of a few ardent symbolist-wagnerians. Grandiose plans for festival works, orphic myths rendered by a fusion of all the arts together, are almost everyday dreams in symbolist reviews; some were even attempted; the idea of such a venture tinges literary criticism, to the point where, for example, Mallarmé re-interpreted 'Hamlet' as an esoteric mystery play of the Hero walking through a world of dream. 'Axël' for that matter is one half Wagnerian (in the sense that Villiers held Wagner to be 'idealist myth') and one-half rosicrucian 'Hamlet'.

The ultimate means of effecting the fusion, or synthesis, as some wisely preferred to call it, was never very exactly explained; what was wanted was perhaps no more than poetic drama with musical embellishment; although the experimental theatre of the 'nineties made valiant efforts, even to the point of syringing perfumes at the audience, nothing was really to hand for these monumental works—neither a poetic texture, nor the necessary virtuosity in the treatment of decor, nor the music, nor the public. Mallarmé already in 1885 dubbed this dream-ideal 'the monster that cannot be', though he continued to toy with the idea of one of his own right up to the time of his death. And it would seem as though those elusive and unrecorded monologues which he delivered on Tuesday evenings with such effect, and whose hallucinating charm so many of his hearers have borne witness to, were frequently musings on the difficulties and implications of the venture—metaphysical, ambiguous, and grandly hopeless. Nevertheless, as the self-appointed defender of pure poetry, Mallarmé also held firmly to the conviction that the Word had its own range of music, of landscapes, of choreography even; although he wrote fitfully on ballet, on concerts, on circuses, even on painting, he was keenly aware that when he took up pen and sat down before the forbidding sheet of white paper, any concession to the technical needs of other arts than his own would destroy his musings. And this is not so hard to appreciate. We are charmed by his 'Après-midi d'un faune', or content to listen to Debussy's free rendering of it; who could imagine the same fluidity, and lightness, surviving in the text in any more exact setting? Or again, even Maeterlinck's 'Pelléas et Mélisande', which on reading we can still generously surround with a certain misty halo, becomes, in contact with its musical setting, and particularly in a stage performance, infinitely harder, more prosy—an unwitting and ironical vindication of Wagner's firm decision to give his music and his libretto distinct though interdependent functions.

On the side of painting, it is no less awkward to find a positive connection with symbolist ideals, or a direct practical outcome. Mallarmé, the most promising case, stood in very much the same relation to the younger poets as his contemporary Manet stood to the Impressionists. In spite of the friendship of these two men, it would be hard to point to any artistic interchange between them, beyond a common rejection of crude realism in either field, and that is not saying much. The same holds when we consider the Impressionists of the 'seventies and the literary movement of the 'eighties. What is the poetic equivalent of the decomposition of light? What is common ground between on the one hand a fresh vision of the open air, and a more or less definite technical programme, and on the other an infinitely precious, perfume-laden, hieratic Des Esseintes, or the fastidious mythologising idealism of André Gide's *Traité du Narcisse*?

### Convictions Repudiated

The only possible answer is along the lines ventured by Félix Fénéon: the symbolist poet (his example was Moréas) repudiates every convention for the texture of his prosody, and looked for new correlations of rhythm and sense, sounds and symbols: just as the impressionist masters, instead of prejudging on their palettes the general values of their work in mixtures which could only destroy the force of their colour (so Fénéon suggests) discover that value on the canvas itself by the interaction of their purer tones. The analogy, I confess, seems not to take us far. But what more effective could be found? At least it brings us back to the point already made, that the experimental art (as a whole) of this time is mainly remarkable for its insatiable and often scandalising curiosity as to means. From the point of view of symbolism's message one sometimes feels that what was wanted to illustrate it was, after all, a stray Pre-Raphaelite.

Perhaps when one embarks on enquiries of this sort, the most definite

(continued on page 885)



## The Spur of the Moment

## Pleasures of the Bath Assembly

By J. B. PRIESTLEY

LAST Monday night\* I went to the theatre with some American friends who have been doing more theatre-going than I would have thought possible for anybody over the age of twenty. But they had come from Southern California where there is only a mere sketch of a theatre, and so they were determined to miss nothing. We saw Ben Jonson's 'Bartholomew Fair' at the Old Vic. Contrary to general report, this is a capital production and makes a superb evening's entertainment, crammed with colour, bustle, clowning and Jonson's tangy prose, and some astonishingly good character acting from the younger members of the Old Vic Company. The producer of this uproarious piece—and I cannot imagine a harder job—is Mr. George Devine, and it will be a great pity if he, together with his two brilliant colleagues, is allowed to resign from the Old Vic. Gentlemen, we need you all, so please try to settle your differences. Incidentally, is it necessary that all the governors of the Old Vic should be persons, however eminent and judicious, who possess no working knowledge of theatrical life?

## The River Illuminated

Leaving the gay antics of 'Bartholomew Fair' for the Waterloo Road, we found our own world very drab at first; but in a few minutes we were walking across Waterloo Bridge and joining the crowd who were admiring the illuminations on either side. I promise not to mention these lights again, but I must go on record here to say that their very presence, transforming the river into liquid gold and adorning old London with so many crowns, diadems and tiaras, was visibly uplifting the spirits of all the thousands of spectators, who had paid nothing but their bus or tube fares for this vast show. It is not easy to impress visitors from Southern California, except by what is old, historical, or quaint and cute; but this illuminated riverside London did the trick. 'Aw gee!' they cried, in their Californian way; and meant it too. I listened to their cries of pleasure and admiration with the complacent satisfaction of a man who had practically turned on all those lights himself, and probably made many of the bulbs. But I was not too busy to notice that the true Festival spirit was with us.

This spirit has, in fact, overflowed from London and even reached the West Country. I say this because on the following day I travelled down to Bath, now holding its annual Assembly. Now I had visited this Assembly, which is their eighteenth-century manner of describing a Festival, only last year when I had had to make a speech at the luncheon of the West Country Writers' Conference. The West Country writers are a pleasant lot, but to tell the truth I am never fond of my colleagues in the mass, and did not care much for this lunch or for the Assembly of which it was a small part. In short, I did not feel that last year's Bath Assembly was going well. But this year, in spite of the heavy competition in London, it is doing very well indeed, with the ballet, concerts, the Festival Club, the various sideshows and exhibitions, all doing a roaring trade. I have been told by various local men that this Assembly is so much better this year simply because it is much better organised, thanks chiefly, I gathered, to the various local men who told me about it. No doubt superior organisation, longer and more sensible planning, have contributed most to the success of this year's Assembly; but I cannot help feeling that it owes something to the Festival of Britain itself, to our general air of festivity. The visitors from the Dominions and America who keep arriving at and departing from my hotel here must have been attracted by the Festival of Britain rather than by any superior local arrangements for the Assembly.

Successful as they seem to be, however, these arrangements do not pass entirely unchallenged and uncriticised. A large, fierce man collared me in the Festival Club, the other night, when I was cooling off after the music, and told me that Bath these days was far more an industrial than a resort town—though, thank Heaven, it does not look it—and that there had been some grumbling among the workers, who said they were having to pay for stuff—symphonic music and the like—that they did not want and that there was little or nothing for them. With the latter half of the grumble, that they are not having their share of the

amusement, I sympathise; but their complaint that they are paying for music, ballet, drama, they do not want gets no support from me. Chiefly, of course, because I *do* want these things, and so do not mind who pays for them, am even willing to pay myself. But also because this familiar complaint about paying rates for what you do not want yourself only seems to turn up when things like good music and drama are offered. All my adult life I have been paying rates and taxes for things I do not want myself, from bowling greens to geological museums, swimming baths to permanent exhibitions of bad Victorian water-colours; and I have not made a fuss about it. Public free libraries actually rob me of royalties; but I make no protest against supporting them. Live and let live, my friends. And consider yourselves lucky, if you are industrial workers, to be living in a city as bewitching as Bath, where at every turn a noble vista of old stone, a street, a colonnade, a window or door, or a mere fanlight, charms the eye and soothes the mind. Why, even the Mayor here, instead of being the usual flat-footed, bewhiskered male, is a handsome woman. In general appearance and atmosphere, shape and size, Bath is my idea of a city; and as soon as possible it should provide itself with more hotels and offer the world an Assembly graced with all the arts, from March to October every year.

It has no concert hall—England is no longer 'a land without music', as the nineteenth-century Germans used to call it, but it is very much a land without concert halls—so Sir John Barbirolli and Sir Thomas Beecham had to bring their respective orchestras into a large cinema, where we all sweated with them. I was brought up, so to speak, on the Hallé Orchestra, which generally played at our Bradford Subscription Concerts, under the commanding beat of old Hans Richter. It was a very solid orchestra, filled with solid middle-aged men, who drank a lot of beer at the Queen's Hotel just opposite our concert hall. But now, if old Richter were suddenly brought back to conduct it, he would fall off his rostrum with astonishment and dismay. For strange things have happened to the Hallé, which has a golden-haired tympanist called Joyce—and very good she is too—and a principal trombone called Maisie, and Janets and Patricias, Norahs and Elizabeths, twinkling along the woodwinds and strings. But Sir John Barbirolli, who has a wonderful ear for string tone, conjured out of these girl-studded instrumentalists the old Hallé richness and warmth, its remembered nobility of sound. And what a work is this Fourth Symphony of Vaughan Williams that he gave us! So unexpected, so terrifying, as if Vaughan Williams, instead of looking like a philosophical farmer, came striding on to the platform, a gigantic figure with brazen helmet, shield and spear, to tell us of lost battles and burning cities. In this symphony, begun in 1931, there is all the second world war, with a glimpse or two of further ruin and desolation. And what a compelling and boundless art we have here in symphonic music! Sometimes I feel that when the moment arrives to survey and estimate comparatively all that men have achieved on this planet, the chief contribution of western man in the age of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries will be considered to be the symphony orchestra, that astonishing many-handed instrument, and its music.

## 'Something to Rejoice At'

After the Hallé, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, commanded majestically and yet with superb devilment by Sir Thomas Beecham. Sir Thomas enjoys speaking his mind and having a good grumble, which we more than tolerate from such a public benefactor; and I trust he will not be offended if one of the customers, an old customer too, speaks his mind and grumbles a little; so I tell him here and now that his programme last Thursday in Bath was not good enough for his superb orchestra or the occasion, being badly planned and altogether too bitty. Nevertheless, his performance of the Sibelius symphonic poem 'Tapiola' was something to rejoice at; and as we listened to those bitter lashing strings, we forgot the cinema was much too hot, and shivered in some northern forest, whipped by a wind from Siberia. Strange that this conductor, who can dance his way



through Mozart better than any man living, should be equally successful with the grim, icy Sibelius.

On the next night there was a Masked Ball in the Pump Room and the Roman Bath. From the moment I had first heard of this occasion, I had made up my mind to be there. First, because although I have had my fair share of human experience, I had never before attended a Masked Ball, and clearly Bath was the place for it. Secondly, because in a recent novel of mine I had described at some length a Festival Ball, and I wanted to see how reality compared with fiction. (And not to leave you in suspense, I will announce here that my Ball was more amusing but theirs was more spectacular.) Even by dinner-time, my hotel seemed to be filled with gentlemen in eighteenth-century costume and ladies wearing white wigs and wide hooped skirts. All I did was to put on evening clothes and then wear a narrow black mask, as we were instructed to do. In scores of romantic tales I must have read about people wearing these masks, but what nobody mentioned, probably because the authors themselves were unaware of the fact, was that these masks soon become embarrassingly hot to their wearers; so that you find yourself eagerly unmasking, not to confront some faithless lady and denounce her in blank verse, but simply to wipe away the perspiration and give your face a chance to breathe.

After dodging about from room to room and admiring the various fantastic head-dresses—for there was a competition involving these creations, I wanted to smoke a pipe, so I went down below to the level of the Roman baths, where the green warm water was reflecting the lights from the columns, and it was cool and quiet and had the right atmosphere for a reflective pipe-smoker. Meditating on Roman Britain, which has always fascinated me, for here, eighteen centuries ago, were these great baths, with their crowds of patrons and mob of attendant slaves, at a time when we tend to think of our island as a wilderness, I stood and smoked among the shadowy ruins of the old hot dry room, with the dance bands faintly pom-pomming above my head, and thought of history and time. From there I looked between dark pillars across the glass-green water of the large bath to an opening on the far side, sharply lit, where people emerged to walk round

the side of the bath; and at one moment there would be figures in ordinary evening clothes of our time, then there would be the white wigs, the wide skirts and satin breeches of the mid-eighteenth century, or a high-waisted Jane Austen heroine alongside one of Wellington's officers with a red tunic and thick epaulettes, and the centuries were no longer marching in a stately procession, but were preparing themselves for a round dance, and Time was a dream.

On Saturday afternoon I went to the old Theatre Royal, a favourite of mine, which was packed to the roof, as it had been all the week, by folk, mostly young, watching and applauding the Ballet Rambert. They were doing some new ballets, including one, by their leading male dancer and choreographer, David Paltenghi, on the 'Eve of St. Agnes', full of admirable and promising things. And who would have believed, thirty years ago, twenty years ago, that now the easiest way to pack any theatre, wherever it may be in this island, is to engage a ballet? How we are changing!

And so is the weather, much for the worse. The leading event in Bath on Saturday was an out-of-door affair, no less than a performance by the Boyd Neel Orchestra, in eighteenth-century costume, of Handel's 'Water Music' on a decorated and illuminated barge on the river near Pulteney Bridge. And of course it rained. It had kept fine for several nights while we were all indoors, but now it had to rain, hard too. And there we stood, thousands and thousands of us, lining the steep river banks, not far from where the buildings on Pulteney Bridge were sharply floodlit; and the rain fell steadily from the blackness above, where lurks that weather demon who hates us English; and then there were clapping and cheerings, and, cutting through them, the sound of fiddles, and there came magnificently into view the barge picked out in golden lights, with a flashing crown on its roof, and we could catch a glimpse of bewigged, blue- and pink-coated fiddlers. The barge remained within sight, scattering its gold on the river; across the water came the 'Water Music'; the thousands on either bank remained to applaud each fine old tune; the rain fell ceaselessly; and Bath was damp and bedraggled—but still a Queen—bless her!

—Home and General Overseas Services

## A Progressive Game

EVELYN WAUGH on the Exhibition of 'Modern Books and Writers'

THE National Book League do not claim to be an academy establishing the prestige of one writer, rebuking the licence of another. They simply, frankly and quite laudably wish to establish the prestige of books in general. Their motto might be taken from George Orwell's original farm: 'All the animals are equal'. But this year, in order to contribute to the gaiety of the present festivities, they have added 'but some animals are more equal than others', and charged a committee to select from the publications of the last thirty years one hundred which they thought specially notable. Although the judges explicitly repudiate the claim, this list has inevitably been dubbed 'the hundred best books'.

The hundred best books would, of course, consist of an average of four or five books from twenty or twenty-five writers. The Book League have decided that there shall be one book by each writer chosen; they might, one would think, have allowed two exhibits to those who have written both prose and poetry, and several more to those versatile minds such as Mr. Aldous Huxley and Mr. Ronald Knox, who are equally eminent in three or four quite distinct branches of literature. However, the rule was made and has been strictly kept, and the resulting catalogue is a document which provides high entertainment. I say 'the catalogue', for the exhibition itself is not extravagantly exciting. Last year the Dutch organised something of the kind at The Hague. They invited modern writers to send objects expressive of their personalities. One British novelist sent a patchwork cushion cover, while another sent his sword. There are no such treats in Albemarle Street. Here there are only a hundred broody faces, and a hundred heaps of manuscript. Go there by all means to see the charming examples of printing and book design, which are also on view, but, dear ladies and gentlemen of the Third Programme, if you wish to preserve the Festival spirit, shun the hundred best authors. Just

slip in, purchase a catalogue, and take it home with you. It is itself the product of a laborious paper game, and it can be used in a number of diverting ways.

Let us begin by marking ourselves. These books, let us assume, constitute the minimum essential furniture of any civilised home. They represent an annual expenditure of less than two pounds. How many are on your shelves? How many have you read? The system of marking I suggest is: one for each book and author you have heard of. You must have heard of both to score. It is no good claiming that you have heard the name Lehmann and connect it with literature. You must be able to answer correctly: Who wrote *The Ballad and the Source*? Two marks for each book we either possess or have read: three for each we both possess and have read. The maximum score, of course, is 300. I suppose that if it were a list of the best books of 1820-1850, we should all score about 250. For our own times, surely, any score under 200 is a disgrace. I have tried it on several friends. An Oxford don, himself an exhibit, scored just 200. One of the judges, I am reliably informed, scored 201. Since he or she must have read all the works selected, this can only mean he or she possesses only one. Which one, I wonder? I myself scored 171. The highest score so far is 216 by Mr. Graham Greene; the lowest, 142, by Mr. Henry Green, both of them, of course, exhibits themselves. The average score, I find, for normally well-read people—the kind of people for whom authors write and to whom they look for their living—is well under 150. It is a rather disturbing conclusion. Writers cannot support life by buying one another's books. How do we expect literature to survive, still less to flourish, if we are so indifferent to it?

But before we accuse ourselves too harshly, let us consider two possible explanations. It may be that we have just lived through a particularly barren period in which contemporary books were not



desirable acquisitions; in which, in fact, we got better value for our money from gin and films. Or it may be that this list is too narrow or too recondite, and that we possess, know and love a hundred better books.

It would be absurd to pretend that we have progressed beyond the splendours of the period 1820-1850, but when I confidently say we should all score highly on that period, I am thinking of books rather than writers. We can effortlessly rattle off twenty or thirty names of that period—among them the very greatest in our history. Then we have to think, and can with an effort produce, say, another twenty. After that most of us, I think, would stick. A hundred swans and no geese is altogether too much to ask of any, thirty years of any nation. Certainly we cannot accuse the judges of narrowing their field. They have extended it almost too far. This is the *National Book League* celebrating the Festival of *Britain*. A certain insularity would have been excusable. This list is compiled from the wide world. They have drawn on the Empire, as I suppose they have good right to do. There are the expatriates, fugitives from Welfare who live abroad and mean to stay there. They are a formidable part of the list. No doubt they are technically British, but they are scarcely the names to display from the Skylon advertising our way of life. And how about the Irish? James Joyce's *Ulysses* is among the exhibits. He was born and brought up in what is now alien soil. He lived and died on the Continent. *Ulysses* was published in Paris, and for many years it was a criminal offence to introduce a copy into this kingdom. Can we really claim him as a national hero?

### Naturalised Americans

And how about naturalised Americans? Surely we can either claim Logan Pearsall Smith and Mr. T. S. Eliot, or Mr. Auden? Can we claim all three? The judges do. It would be a very thin list indeed if it had been strictly patriotic. Even so it is pretty thin. A hundred was too many to ask for. The result is that no one can feel the least elated at being included, while almost anyone can feel justifiably aggrieved if he is left out. The judges seem chiefly conscious of this latter consideration, and have contrived a curiously enigmatic apology. 'The Committee', they say in their preface, 'regards each author as being the delegate on behalf of others who have been excluded because of the limits of the Exhibition's space'. Now what on earth does that mean? It is the practice of the Army when a unit has fought exceptionally well to decorate the commanding officer. Both he and his men fully realise that the honour is shared by all. But writers do not advance in troops and squadrons. Each works alone producing a separate self-sufficient object. We must, I suppose, imagine a judge being haunted by the ghost of Hugh Walpole. He placates the troubled spirit by saying: 'Sweet Sir Hugh, rest in peace. You have a delegate. The Order of Knights is represented by Sir Maurice Bowra'.

It is not to be expected or desired that our choice shall coincide everywhere with the judges'. They tell us that some writers refused to join. That may account for some odd omissions among the living, but it cannot explain the absence of G. K. Chesterton, Maurice Baring and Ford Madox Ford. A very good game can be played by drawing up lists of books none of which is included. Would your own list be much better? Try and see. My own impression is that, granted certain pre-existing limitations of taste, the judges have done well, and that makes all the sadder what candour compels one to admit: that the general impression of the Exhibition is depressing. One can but sum up three-quarters of it as 'dreariness relieved by frivolity'. There is plenty of competence, plenty of fun, a remarkable absence of imposture and bluster. But there is a woeful absence of glory, and also—what one would not expect—a complete divorce from life. For the absence of glory we cannot blame our judges. There are no towering geniuses whom they have jealously ignored. The really great come and go unpredictably. We happen now to have struck a bad patch. That is all. But the separation of life and art argues either an unhealthy civilisation or some obscurity of judgment in the committee.

At Christmas time, literary editors often solicit eminent men and women—and I don't mean film stars and pugilists; I mean just the kind of people who form the basis of the critical, informed reading public—to name their favourite book of the year. Nine times out of ten, you will find that they choose something which is not by a professional writer at all. Now our judges at this Exhibition have been loyally professional. They want to encourage the whole-time writer, with the result that even the book-reviewers, if they have themselves written a book, get a place. There is just a whiff of trade unionism

about their preferences. But this is not the heart of the matter. It accounts for some of the dreariness, but not for the frivolity of their taste. When I say 'divorce from life' I do not primarily mean from lively autobiographies and accounts of adventures. I mean the moments when a writer believes he has something of value to say. Let us take two examples—D. H. Lawrence and Mr. Huxley. Both are known everywhere abroad as prophets and messengers. Personally, I consider their messages erroneous. That is not the point. It is for this that they are known. In each case the judges have represented them by a minor literary exercise.

Let us for a moment examine the judges themselves; Miss Rose Macaulay, Mr. Pritchett and Professor Day Lewis. They need, as chairmen say, no introduction. Their attainments seem to be wide apart. But there clearly must be sympathy in any committee, otherwise its consultations become fruitless wrangles like a meeting of foreign ministers. What have these three in common? I think one can find the answer quite simply in the lowest common denominator. There is only one piece of plain trash in the Exhibition, and that is H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*. Miss Macaulay is not a lady of ungovernable political passion, but she will not, I am sure, think it either impolite or inaccurate if I describe her as 'progressive'. Mr. Pritchett is closely associated with the leading socialist weekly. Professor Lewis was a leading member of the Marxist school of writers in the late 'thirties. All, in varying degrees, are what foreigners call of 'the Left'. H. G. Wells' cosmology is their meeting ground, but having established this by its inclusion, they then go to great lengths to avoid partiality. Politicians are represented by Mr. Winston Churchill and Sir Duff Cooper, not by Mr. John Strachey; clergymen by Archbishop Mathew, not by the Dean of Canterbury. At least half their chosen authors are traditional Tories, or else possessed by some idiosyncrasy which progressives call 'cannibalism'. The judges seem, at a glance, to have triumphed over their prejudices. But it is not quite as simple as that. What they have done is to fall back on the arid standards of pure literary taste, in order to suppress anything tendentious unless the tendency is 'progressive'.

Professor Lewis set forth his aesthetic in his preface to *The Mind in Chains*. This is a frustrated artistic epoch, he says, because we live under such peculiar social conditions that it is possible for a man to work for his own profit. The only hope for the artist is to identify himself with the proletariat. Well, there is very little proletarian inspiration in this eminently genteel Exhibition, but then there is very little inspiration. As though deliberately to illustrate the frustration of man, the judges show an odd preference for the first or very early publications of writers whose powers have widened and deepened. If it had happened once, twice, three times, one might have accepted the tragic fact of early promise unfulfilled, but it happens again and again. It is partly, perhaps, the boredom of the reviewer whose sad lot is now and then brightened by a discovery, but more often depressed by the need to find something new to say about an established writer. But it is also the voice of the progressive saying: 'Look at her; killed by capitalism'.

But there is a further and deeper cause for the dreariness and frivolity of the Wells view of life—its atheism. This feature is curiously illuminated in the Exhibition's 'Preface'. In a staggering verdict the three judges write: 'It sometimes happens that important books, especially of criticism, are badly written. There are examples in our selection. Important books have been written on economics, divinity and science, but they are specialised and unless the authors are remarkably good writers, they are not considered eligible'.

### Cat Out of the Bag

There we have the progressive cat, a great brute of an animal, clear out of the bag. One would have supposed that there are few drearier spectacles than a critic who could not write. But like a trade union official who has lost productive dexterity, he must be accepted as part of the industry. But Divinity, the Queen of Sciences, the mainspring and deep abiding channel of human thought; the branch of writing which, at its lowest, is first in the English tradition from the start of our tongue until the death of our grandparents, which filled our libraries with homilies and controversy, and occupied the sharpest minds of every age, which even today is second, I believe, for quantity in all branches of publishing, and for quality commands the deepest intellects and the sharpest wits; the science which deals with the purpose and destination of the spirit of man—that, compared with a literary critic who can't express himself, is merely something 'specialised'. Dear ladies and gentlemen of the Third Programme, words fail me.—*Third Programme*



The New Society—IV

# From Individualism to Mass Democracy

By E. H. CARR

THE problem of political organisation in the new society is to adapt to the mass civilisation of the twentieth century conceptions of democracy formed in earlier and highly individualistic periods of history. The proclamation by the French Revolution of popular sovereignty was a serious challenge to institutions which had grown up under quite different auspices and influences. It is no accident that Athenian democracy, which has been commonly regarded as the source and exemplar of democratic institutions, was the creation and prerogative of a limited and privileged group of the population. It is no accident that Locke, the founder of the modern democratic tradition, was the chosen philosopher and prophet of the eighteenth-century English Whig oligarchy. It is no accident that the magnificent structure of British nineteenth-century liberal democracy was built up on a highly restrictive property franchise. History points unmistakably to the fact that political democracy, in the forms in which it has hitherto been known, flourishes best where some of the people, but not all the people, are free and equal; and, since this conclusion is incompatible with the conditions of the new society and repugnant to the contemporary conscience, the task of defending democracy in our time is the task of reconciling it with the postulate of popular sovereignty and mass civilisation.

## Three Main Propositions

Modern democracy, as it grew and spread from its focus in western Europe over the past three centuries, rested on three main propositions: first, that the individual conscience is the ultimate source of decisions about what is right and wrong; second, that there exists between different individuals a fundamental harmony of interests strong enough to enable them to live peacefully together in society; third, that where action has to be taken in the name of society, rational discussion between individuals is the best method of reaching a decision on that action. Modern democracy is, in virtue of its origins, individualist, optimistic and rational. The three main propositions on which it is based have all been seriously challenged in the contemporary world.

In the first place, the individualist conception of democracy rests on a belief in the inherent rights of individuals based on natural law. According to this conception, the function of democratic government is not to create or innovate, but to interpret and apply rights which already exist. This accounts for the importance attached in the democratic tradition to the rights of minorities within the citizen body. Decision by majority vote might be a necessary and convenient device. But individuals belonging to the minority had the same inherent rights as those belonging to the majority. Insistence on the rule of law, preferably inscribed in a written and permanent constitution, was an important part of the individualist tradition of democracy. The individual enjoyed certain indefeasible rights against the society of which he was a member; these rights were often regarded as deriving from a real or hypothetical 'social contract' which formed the title-deeds of society. Just as the individualist tradition in *laissez-faire* economics was hostile to all forms of combination, so the individualist tradition in politics was inimical to the idea of political parties. Both in Athenian democracy and in eighteenth-century Britain, parties were regarded with mistrust and denounced as 'factions'.

The French Revolution, with its announcement of the sovereignty of the people, made the first serious assault on this view of democracy. The individualism of Locke's 'natural law' was replaced by the collectivism of Rousseau's 'general will'. Both Pericles and Locke had thought in terms of a small and select society of privileged citizens. Rousseau for the first time thought in terms of the sovereignty of the whole people, and faced the issue of mass democracy. He did so reluctantly; for he himself preferred the tiny community where direct democracy, without representation or delegation of powers, was still possible. But he recognised that the large nation had come to stay, and held that in such conditions the people could be sovereign only if it imposed on itself the discipline of a 'general will'. The practical conclusion drawn from this doctrine, not by Rousseau himself, but by

the Jacobins, was the foundation of a single political party to embody the general will. Its logical conclusions were still more far-reaching. The individual, far from enjoying rights against society assured to him by natural law, had no appeal against the deliverances of the general will. The general will was the repository of virtue and justice, the state its instrument for putting them into effect. The individual who dissented from the general will cut himself off from the community and was a self-proclaimed traitor to it. Rousseau's doctrine led directly to the Jacobin practice of revolutionary terror. It would be idle to embark on a theoretical discussion of the rival merits of the two conceptions of democracy. Individualism is an oligarchic doctrine—the doctrine of the select and enterprising few who refuse to be merged in the mass. The function of natural law in modern history, though it is susceptible of other interpretations, has been to sanctify existing rights and to brand as immoral attempts to overthrow them. A conception based on individual rights rooted in natural law was a natural product of the oligarchic and conservative eighteenth century. It was equally natural that this conception should be challenged and overthrown in the ferment of a revolution that proclaimed the supremacy of popular sovereignty.

While, however, the beginnings of mass democracy can be discerned in the doctrines of Rousseau and in the practice of the French Revolution, the problem in its modern form was a product of the nineteenth century. The industrial revolution started its career under the banner of individual enterprise. Adam Smith was as straightforward an example as could be desired of eighteenth-century individualism. But presently the machine overtook the man, and the competitive advantages of mass production ushered in the age of standardisation and larger and larger economic units. And with the mammoth trust and the mammoth trade union came the mammoth organ of opinion, the mammoth political party and, floating above them all, the mammoth state, narrowing still further the field of responsibility and action left to the individual and setting the stage for the new mass society. It was the English Utilitarians who, by rejecting natural law, turned their backs on the individualist tradition and, by postulating the greatest good of the greatest number as the supreme goal, laid the theoretical foundation of mass democracy in Britain; in practice, they were also the first radical reformers. Before long, thinkers began to explore some of the awkward potentialities of mass democracy. The danger of the oppression of minorities by the majority was the most obvious. This was discerned by Tocqueville in the United States in the eighteenth-thirties and by J. S. Mill in England twenty-five years later. In our own time the danger has reappeared in a more insidious form. Soviet Russia has a form of government which describes itself as a democracy. It claims, not without some historical justification, to stem from the Jacobins, who stemmed from Rousseau and the doctrine of the general will. The general will is an orthodoxy which purports to express the common opinion; the minority which dissents can legitimately be suppressed. But we are not concerned here with the abuses and excesses of the Soviet form of government. What troubles us is the question how far, in moving from the individualism of restrictive liberal democracy to the mass civilisation of today, we have ourselves become involved in a conception of democracy which postulates a general will.

## 'Loyalty Tests' and Party Discipline

The question is all around us today, not only in the form of loyalty tests, avowed or secret, and of committees on un-American activities, but also in the form of the closed shop and of increasingly rigid standards of party discipline. In a speech made to a regional Labour Party conference at the time of Mr. Aneurin Bevan's resignation last month, the Minister of Defence denounced 'absence of loyalty' in the party. 'The loyalty of our party', exclaimed Mr. Shinwell, 'is superior to any exhibition of political private enterprise . . . No person, I don't care who he is, can be allowed to interfere with the democratic structure of this party'. Lenin used strikingly similar language in a



famous speech on party unity at the Bolshevik party congress in March 1921. We have all of us moved far today from a conception of truth emerging from the free interplay of divergent individual opinions. Loyalty has come to mean the submission of the individual to the general will of the party or group.

The second postulate of Locke's conception of society, the belief in a fundamental harmony of interests between individuals, equally failed to stand the test of time, and for much the same reason. Even more than natural law, the harmony of interests was essentially a conservative doctrine. If the interest of the individual rightly understood coincided with the interest of the whole society, it followed that any individual who assailed the existing order was acting against his own true interests and could be condemned not only as wicked, but as short-sighted and foolish. Some such argument was, for instance, often invoked against strikers who failed to recognise the common interest uniting them with their employers. The French Revolution, an act of self-assertion by the third estate against the two senior estates of nobility and clergy, demonstrated—like any other violent upheaval—the hollowness of the harmony of interests; and the doctrine was soon also to be powerfully challenged on the theoretical plane.

### Challenge from the Utilitarians

The challenge came from two quarters. The Utilitarians, while not making a frontal attack on the doctrine, implicitly denied it when they asserted that the harmony of interests had to be created by remedial action before it would work. They saw that some of the worst existing inequalities would have to be reformed out of existence before it was possible to speak without irony of a society based on a harmony of interests; and they believed in increased education and the true liberty of thought which would result from it as a necessary preparation for establishing harmony. Then Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* took the class struggle and made out of it a theory of history which, partial though it was, stood nearer to current reality than the theory of the harmony of interests had ever done. Social and economic pressures resulting from the breakdown of *laissez-faire* illustrated in practice what Marx had demonstrated in theory.

But in Great Britain it was reformist Utilitarianism rather than revolutionary Marxism that set the pace. The flagrant absence of a harmony of interests between competing and conflicting classes more and more urgently called for state intervention. The state could no longer be content to hold the ring; it must descend actively into the arena to create a harmony which did not exist in nature. Legislation, hitherto regarded as an exceptional function required from time to time to clear up some misunderstanding or to rectify some abuse, now became normal and continuous. It no longer sufficed to interpret and apply rights conferred on the individual by the laws of nature. What was expected of the state was positive and continuous activity—a form of social and economic engineering. The substitution of a planned economy for *laissez-faire* capitalism brought about a radical transformation in the attitude towards the state. The functions of the state were no longer merely supervisory, but creative and remedial. It was no longer an organ whose weakness was its virtue and whose activities should be restricted to a minimum in the interests of freedom. It was an organ which one sought to capture and control for the carrying out of necessary reforms; and having captured it, one sought to make it as powerful and effective as possible in order to carry them out. The twentieth century has not only replaced individualist democracy by mass democracy, but has finally substituted the cult of the strong remedial state for the doctrine of the natural harmony of interests.

The third main characteristic of Locke's conception of society—a characteristic which helped to give the eighteenth century its nicknames of the Age of Reason or the Age of Enlightenment—was its faith in rational discussion as a guide to political action. This faith provided the most popular nineteenth-century justification of the rule of the majority as the basis of democracy. Since men were on the whole rational, and since the right answer to any given issue could be discovered by reason, one was more likely, in the case of dispute, to find right judgment on the side of the majority than on the side of the minority. Like other eighteenth-century conceptions, the doctrine of reason in politics was the doctrine of a ruling oligarchy. The rational approach to politics, which encouraged leisurely argument and eschewed passion, was eminently the approach of a well-to-do, leisured and cultured class. Its efficacy could be most clearly and certainly guaranteed when the citizen body consisted of a relatively small number of educated persons who could be trusted to reason intelligently and dis-

passionately on controversial issues submitted to them. The prominent role assigned to reason in the original democratic scheme provides perhaps the most convincing explanation why democracy has hitherto always seemed to flourish best with a restrictive franchise. Much has been written in recent years of the decline of reason, and of respect for reason, in human affairs, when sometimes what has really happened has been the abandonment of the highly simplified eighteenth-century view of reason in favour of a subtler and more sophisticated analysis. But it is none the less true that the epoch-making changes in our attitude towards reason provide a key to some of the profoundest problems of contemporary democracy.

First of all, the notion that men of intelligence and good will by process of rational discussion were likely to reach a correct opinion on controversial political questions could be valid only in an age when such questions were comparatively few, and simple enough to be accessible to the educated layman. It implicitly denied that any specialised knowledge was required to solve political problems. This hypothesis was perhaps tenable so long as the state was not required to intervene in economic issues, and the questions on which decisions had to be taken turned on matters of practical detail or general political principles. In the first half of the twentieth century these conditions had everywhere ceased to exist. In Great Britain major issues of a highly controversial character like the return to the gold standard in 1925 or the acceptance of the American loan in 1946 were of a kind in which no opinion seriously counted except that of the trained expert in possession of a vast array of facts and figures, some of them probably not available to the public. In such matters the ordinary citizen could not even have an intelligent opinion on the question who were the best experts to consult. The only role he could hope to play was to exercise his hunch at the election by choosing the right leader to consult the right experts about vital, though probably still unformulated, issues of policy which would ultimately affect his daily life.

At this initial stage of the argument reason itself is not dethroned from its supreme role in the decision of political issues. The citizen is merely asked to surrender his right of decision to the superior reason of the expert. At the second stage of the argument reason itself is used to dethrone reason. The social psychologist, employing rational methods of investigation, discovers that men in the mass are often most effectively moved by non-rational emotions such as emulation, envy, hatred, and can be most effectively reached not by rational argument, but by emotional appeals to eye and ear, or by sheer repetition. Propaganda is as essential a function of mass democracy as advertising of mass production. The political organiser takes a leaf out of the book of the commercial advertiser and sells the leader or the candidate to the voter by the same methods used to sell patent medicines or refrigerators. The appeal is no longer to the reason of the citizen but to his gullibility.

### Emergence of the 'Charismatic Leader'

A more recent phenomenon has been the emergence of what Max Weber called the 'charismatic leader' as the expression of the general will. The retreat from individualism seemed to issue at last—and not alone in the so-called totalitarian countries—in the exaltation of a single individual leader who personified and resumed within himself the qualities and aspirations of the 'little man', of the ordinary individual lost and bewildered in the new mass society. But the principal qualification of the leader was no longer his capacity to reason correctly on political or economic issues, or even his capacity to choose the best experts to reason for him, but a good public face, a convincing voice, a sympathetic fireside manner on the radio; and these qualities were deliberately built up for him by his publicity agents. In this picture of the techniques of contemporary democracy, the party headquarters, the directing brain at the centre, still operates rationally, but uses irrational rather than rational means to achieve its ends—means which are, moreover, not merely irrational but largely irrelevant to the purposes to be pursued or to the decisions to be taken.

The third stage of the argument reaches deeper levels. Hegel, drawing out the philosophical implications of Rousseau's doctrine, identified the course of history with universal reason, to which the individual reason stood in the same relation as the individual will to Rousseau's general will. Individual reason had been the corner-stone of individualist democracy. Marx took Hegel's collective reason and made it the corner-stone of the new mass democracy. Marx purported to reject the metaphysical character of Hegel's thought. But, equally with Hegel, he conceived of history pursuing a rational course, which could be

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# NEWS DIARY

May 23-29

## Wednesday, May 23

Communists withdraw on 80-mile front in Korea

Chairman of the National Coal Board outlines new price scheme for coal

French National Assembly prorogued

## Thursday, May 24

President Truman asks Congress to vote over £3,000,000,000 for new combined foreign aid programme

Eighth Army goes over to offensive in Korea  
Lord Hall, First Lord of the Admiralty, resigns, and is succeeded by Lord Pakenham

## Friday, May 25

Statement is published in Washington about recent atomic weapons tests

Four thousand men of the 16th Paratroop Brigade Group to leave for the Mediterranean to reinforce the garrison there

Mr. Gromyko tells Western deputies that a conference of Foreign Ministers is pointless without a discussion of the North Atlantic treaty

Persian Prime Minister says patience of his countrymen is 'almost exhausted' over oil nationalisation dispute

## Saturday, May 26

British Government submits complaint against Persia to International Court at The Hague. The United States sends Note to Persia about oil question

United Nations troops pursue communists across 38th parallel in Korea

H.M. Queen Mary celebrates her eighty-fourth birthday

R. D. Chapman of the United States wins the Amateur Golf Championship

## Sunday, May 27

First American troop reinforcements for General Eisenhower's command arrive in Germany

Peking radio announces that an agreement has been reached for 'a peaceful liberation of Tibet'

## Monday, May 28

Persian Foreign Minister challenges right of Hague Court to deal with oil dispute

Princess Elizabeth opens Festival Exhibition of Industrial Power at Glasgow. Festival Pleasure Gardens open in London

## Tuesday, May 29

Parliament reassembles after Whitsun recess. Mr. Morrison makes a statement about position in Persia

Dr. Malan, the South African Prime Minister, receives protests from ex-servicemen against new franchise bill

Explosion at Easington colliery, County Durham, traps over seventy miners

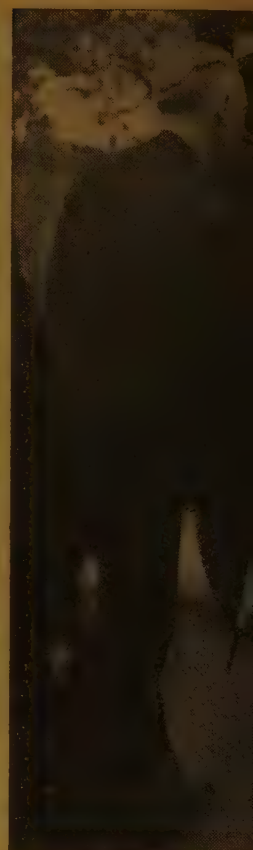


Princess Elizabeth presenting the King's Colour to the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom in Hyde Park on Saturday. Her Royal Highness deputised for the King who had influenza. Above right: H.M. Queen Mary, who celebrated her eighty-fourth birthday on Saturday, arriving in Hyde Park to watch the ceremony

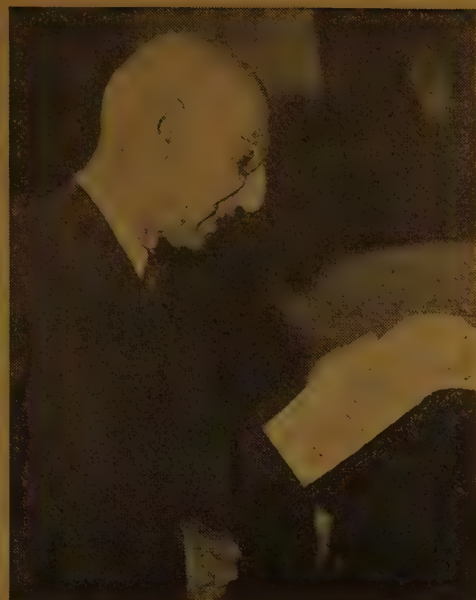


The largest passenger ship to pass through Tower Bridge, the Swedish liner 'Patricia', is seen entering the Pool of London on Saturday on her maiden voyage from Gothenburg. On Sunday the liner was open to the public

Right: Visitors at the Chelsea Flower Show which was held last week







*Dr. Mossadeq, Prime Minister of Persia, reading a statement on the oil dispute with Britain at a press conference in Teheran on May 25. As a result of Persia's refusal to submit the dispute to arbitration, the British Government last week-end opened proceedings against Persia in the International Court of Justice at The Hague. In informing Dr. Mossadeq of their action the British Government made it clear that the offer to settle the dispute by direct negotiation was still open*



*United States Marines bombarding communist positions in Korea with rockets last week as the Eighth Army went over to the offensive along the entire front*



*The King and Queen with Princess Margaret visited the London Stock Exchange on May 24, the 150th anniversary of the laying of the foundation-stone of the present building. His Majesty is seen addressing members from the balcony of the war memorial*



*A Sherlock Holmes exhibition organised by the Marylebone Borough Council opened at No. 221b Baker Street, London, last week. A corner of 'the room in which Holmes lived and practised'*

*Left: suits of armour belonging to King Henry VIII (left and centre) and to the first Earl of Pembroke—examples from an exhibition of armour made in the Royal workshops at Greenwich (founded about 1514 by King Henry VIII and closed about 1637) which is now to be seen at the Tower of London*



(continued from page 875)

analysed and even predicted in terms of reason. Hegel had spoken of the cunning of reason in history, using individuals to achieve purposes of which they themselves were unconscious. Marx would have rejected the turn of phrase as metaphysical. But his conception of history as a continuous process of class struggle contained elements of determinism which revealed its Hegelian ancestry, at any rate on one side. Marx remained a thoroughgoing rationalist. But the reason whose validity he accepted was collective rather than individual.

### Thinking Conditioned by Social Environment

Marx played, however, a far more important part in what has been called 'the flight from reason' than through the mere exaltation of the collective over the individual. By his vigorous assertion that 'being determines consciousness, not consciousness being', that thinking is conditioned by the social environment of the thinker, and that ideas are the superstructure of a totality whose foundation is formed by the material conditions of life, Marx presented a clear challenge to what had hitherto been regarded as the sovereign or autonomous human reason. The actors who played significant parts in the historical drama were playing parts already written for them: this indeed was what made them significant. The function of individual reason was to identify itself with the universal reason which determined the course of history and to make itself the agent and executor of this universal reason. Some such view is indeed involved in any attempt to trace back historical events to underlying social causes; and Marx—and still more Engels—hedged a little in later years about the role of the individual in history. But the extraordinary vigour and conviction with which he drove home his main argument, and the political theory which he founded on it, give him a leading place among those nineteenth-century thinkers who shattered the comfortable belief of the Age of Enlightenment in the decisive power of individual reason in shaping the course of history.

Marx's keenest polemics were directed to prove the 'conditioned' character of the thinking of his opponents, and particularly of the capitalist ruling class of the most advanced countries of his day. If they thought as they did, it was because, as members of a class, 'being' determined their 'consciousness', and their ideas necessarily lacked any independent objectivity and validity. Hegel, as a good conservative, had exempted the current reality of the Prussian state from the operation of the dialectic which had destroyed successively so many earlier historical forms. Marx, as a revolutionary, admitted no such absolute in the present, but only in the future. The proletariat, whose victory would automatically abolish classes, was alone the basis of absolute value; and collective proletarian thinking had thus an objectivity which was denied to the thinking of other classes. Marx's willingness, like that of Hegel, to admit an absolute as the culminating point of his dialectical process seemed, however, an element of inconsistency in his system; and, just as Marx was more concerned to dissect capitalism than to provide a blue-print for socialism, so his use of the dialectic to lay bare the conditioned thinking of his opponents lay nearer to his heart, and was far more effective, than his enunciation of the objective and absolute values of the proletariat. Marx's writings gave a powerful impetus to all forms of relativism. It seemed less important, at a time when the proletarian revolution was as yet nowhere in sight, to note his admission of absolute truth as a prerogative of the proletariat. The proletariat was for Marx the collective repository of Rousseau's infallible general will.

Another thinker of the later nineteenth century indirectly helped to mould the climate of political opinion. Like Darwin, Freud was a scientist without pretensions to be a philosopher or, still less, a political thinker. But in the flight from reason at the end of the nineteenth century, he played the same popular role as Darwin had played a generation earlier in the philosophy of *laissez-faire*. Freud demonstrated that the fundamental attitudes of human beings in action and thought are largely determined at levels beneath that of consciousness, and that the supposedly rational explanations of those attitudes which we offer to ourselves and others are often artificial and erroneous 'rationalisations' of processes which we have failed to understand. Reason is given to us, Freud seems to say, not to direct our thought and action, but to camouflage the hidden forces which do direct it. This is a still more devastating version of the Marxist thesis of substructure and superstructure. The substructure of reality resides in the unconscious: what appears above the surface is no more than the reflection, seen in a distorting ideological mirror, of what goes on underneath. The political conclusion from all this—Freud himself drew none—is that any attempt

to appeal to the reason of the ordinary man is waste of time, or is useful merely as camouflage to conceal the real nature of the process of persuasion; the appeal must be made to those subconscious strata which are decisive for thought and action. The debunking of ideology undertaken by the political science of Marx is repeated in a far more drastic and far-reaching way by the psychological science of Freud and his successors.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, therefore, the propositions of Locke on which the theory of liberal democracy was founded had all been subjected to fundamental attack, and the attack broadened and deepened as the century went on. Individualism began to give way to collectivism both in economic organisation and in the forms and practice of mass democracy: the age of mass civilisation had begun. The alleged harmony of interests between individuals was replaced by the naked struggle between powerful classes and organised interest groups. The belief in the settlement of issues by rational discussion was undermined, first, by recognition of the complex and technical character of the issues involved, later and more seriously, by recognition that rational arguments were merely the conditioned reflection of the class interests of those who put them forward, and, last and most seriously of all, by the discovery that the democratic voter, like other human beings, is most effectively reached not by arguments directed to his reason, but by appeals directed to his irrational, subconscious prejudices. The picture of democracy which emerged from these criticisms was the picture of an arena where powerful interest-groups struggled for the mastery. The leaders themselves were often the spokesmen and instruments of historical processes which they did not fully understand; their followers consisted of voters recruited and marshalled for purposes of which they were wholly unconscious by all the subtle techniques of modern psychological science and modern commercial advertising.

The picture is overdrawn. But we shall not begin to understand the problems of mass democracy unless we recognise the serious elements of truth in it, unless we recognise how far we have moved away from the conceptions and from the conditions out of which the democratic tradition was born. We have left far behind the conception of democracy as a select society of free individuals, enjoying equal rights and periodically electing to manage the affairs of the society a small number of their peers, who deliberate together and decide by rational argument on the course to pursue. The typical mass democracy of today is a vast society of individuals, stratified by widely different social and economic backgrounds into a series of groups or classes, enjoying political rights, the exercise of which is organised through two or more closely integrated political machines called parties. Between the parties and individual citizens stand an indeterminate number of entities variously known as unions, associations, lobbies or pressure-groups devoted to the promotion of some economic interest, or of some social or humanitarian cause, in which keen critics usually detect a latent and perhaps unconscious interest. At the first stage of the democratic process, these associations and groups form a sort of exchange and mart where votes are traded for support of particular policies; the more votes such a group controls the better its chance of having its views incorporated in the party platform. At the second stage, when these bargains have been made, the party as a united entity 'goes to the country' and endeavours by every form of political propaganda to win the support of the unattached voter. At the third stage, when the election has been decided, the parties once more dispute or bargain together, in the light of the votes cast, on the policies to be put into effect; the details of procedure at this third stage differ considerably in different democratic countries in accordance with varying constitutional requirements and party structures.

### Struggle of Interest-Groups?

What is important to note is that the first and third stages are matters of fierce bargaining. At the second stage, where the mass persuasion of the electorate is at issue, the methods employed approximate more and more closely to those of modern commercial advertisers, who, on the advice of modern psychologists, find the appeal to fear, envy or self-aggrandisement more effective than the appeal to reason. Certainly in the United States, where contemporary large-scale democracy has worked most successfully and where the strongest confidence is felt in its survival, experienced practitioners of politics would give little encouragement to the idea that rational argument exercises a major influence on the democratic process. We have returned to a barely disguised struggle of interest-groups in which the arguments used are for the most part no more than a rationalisation of the interests con-



cerned, and the role of persuasion is played by carefully calculated appeals to the irrational subconscious.

This discussion is intended to show not that mass democracy is more corrupt or less efficient than other forms of government (this I do not believe), but that mass democracy is a new phenomenon—a creation of the last half-century—which it is inappropriate and misleading to consider in terms of the philosophy of Locke or of the liberal democracy of the nineteenth century. It is new, because the new democratic society consists no longer of a homogeneous closed society of equal and economically secure individuals mutually recognising one another's rights, but of ill-co-ordinated, highly stratified masses of people of whom a large majority are primarily occupied with the daily struggle for existence. It is new, because the new democratic state can no longer be content to hold the ring in the strife of private economic interests, but must enter the arena at every moment and take the initiative in urgent issues of economic policy which affect the daily life of all the citizens, and especially of the least secure. It is new, because the old rationalist assumptions of Locke and of liberal democracy have broken down under the weight both of changed material conditions and of new scientific insights and inventions, and the leaders of the new democracy are concerned no longer primarily with the reflection of opinion, but with the moulding and manipulation of opinion. To speak today of the defence of democracy as if we were defending something which we knew and had possessed for many decades or many centuries is self-deception.

### Democracy a Matter of Degree

It is no answer to point to institutions that have survived from earlier forms of democracy. The survival of kingship in Great Britain does not prove that the British system of government is a monarchy; and democratic institutions survive in many countries today—some survived even in Hitler's Germany—which have little or no claim to be called democracies. The criterion must be sought not in the survival of traditional institutions, but in the question where power resides and how it is exercised. In this respect democracy is a matter of degree. Some countries today are more democratic than others. But none is perhaps very democratic, if any high standard of democracy is applied. Mass democracy is a difficult and hitherto largely uncharted territory; and we should be nearer the mark, and should have a far more convincing slogan, if we spoke of the need, not to defend democracy, but to create it.

In my second and third lectures I discussed two of the basic problems which confront the new society—the problem of a planned economy and the problem of the right deployment and use of our human resources. These problems are basic in the sense that their solution is a condition of survival. The old methods of organising production are breaking down, and society cannot exist without bringing new ones into operation. But those problems might conceivably be solved—are even, perhaps, in danger of being solved—by other than democratic means: here the task of mass democracy is to meet known and recognised needs by methods that are compatible with democracy, and to do it in time. The central problem which I have been discussing here touches the essence of democracy itself. Large-scale political organisations show many of the characteristics of large-scale economic organisation, and have followed the same path of development. Mass democracy has, through its very nature, thrown up on all sides specialised groups of leaders—what are sometimes called *élites*. Everywhere, in government, in political parties, in trade unions, in co-operatives, these indispensable *élites* have taken shape with startling rapidity over the last thirty years. Everywhere the rift has widened between leaders and rank and file.

The rift takes two forms. In the first place, the interests of the leaders are no longer fully identical with those of the rank and file, since they include the special interest of the leaders in maintaining their own leadership—an interest which is no doubt rationalised, but not always justly, as constituting an interest of the whole group. The leaders, instead of remaining mere delegates of their equals, tend in virtue of their functions to become a separate professional, and then a separate social, group, forming the nucleus of a new ruling class or, more insidiously still, being absorbed into the old ruling class. Secondly, and most important of all, there is an ever increasing gap between the terms in which an issue is debated and solved among leaders and the terms in which the same issue is presented to the rank and file. Nobody supposes that the arguments which the leaders and managers of a political party or a trade union use among themselves in private conclave are the same as those which they present to a meeting of

their members; and the methods of persuasion used from the public platform or over the radio will diverge more widely still from the arguments employed in reaching its decision. When the decision of substance has been taken by the leaders, whether of government, of party or of union, a further decision is often required on the best method of putting the decision across. Broadly speaking, the role of reason varies inversely with the number of those to whom the argument is addressed. The decision of the leaders may be taken on rational grounds. But the motivation of the decision to the rank and file of the party or union, and still more to the general public, will contain a larger element of the irrational the larger the audience becomes. The spectacle of an efficient *élite* maintaining its authority and asserting its will over the mass by the rationally calculated use of irrational methods of persuasion is the most disturbing nightmare of mass democracy.

The problem defies any rough-and-ready answer. It was implicit in Lincoln's formula of government 'of the people' (meaning, I take it, belonging to the people in the sense of popular sovereignty), 'by the people' (implying, I think, direct participation in the business of government) and 'for the people' (requiring an identity of interests between governors and governed only obtainable when such participation occurs). It was implicit in Lenin's much derided demand that every cook should learn to govern and that every worker should take his turn at the work of administration. The building of nineteenth-century democracy was long and arduous. The building of the new mass democracy will be no easier. The historian can here only look back over the way we have come, and analyse the fundamental questions which are being presented to the coming generation. He may be able to throw some light on the nature of the answers that are required; but he cannot define or prescribe them.

For myself, it seems inconceivable that we can return to the individualist democracy of a privileged class; and, by the same token, we cannot return to the exclusively political democracy of the weak state exercising only police functions. We are committed to mass democracy, to egalitarian democracy, to the public control and planning of the economic process, and therefore to the strong state exercising remedial and constructive functions. On the fundamental role of reason I shall say something in my last lecture. Here I will say only that I have no faith in a flight into the irrational or in an exaltation of irrational values. Reason may be an imperfect instrument; and we can no longer take the simple view of its character and functions which satisfied the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But it is none the less in a widening and deepening of the power of reason that we must place our hope. Mass democracy calls just as much as individualist democracy for an educated society as well as for responsible and courageous leaders; for it is only thus that the gap between leaders and masses, which is the major threat to mass democracy, can be bridged. The task is difficult but not hopeless; and just as Great Britain has done more than any other country during the last five years to mark out new lines of social and economic advance, so I believe that she has better opportunities than any other country to lay the foundations of an educated mass democracy. It is a misfortune and a handicap that those tasks should have fallen to her at a moment when her international position is weaker than at any time in the past two centuries; and this brings me to the examination of the international scene which I have to undertake in my next lecture.—*Third Programme*

## Orpheus (after Cocteau)

What are the thoughts of the marble  
From which a sculptor unlocks  
The obstructed face of a god  
With his chisel and hammer strokes?

It thinks, I am being defeated,  
I am broken minute by minute.  
This marble does not perceive  
The god which it has within it.

Life is shaping me, Heurtebise,  
I must bear my part like stone,  
My part, the defeat, the disaster,  
Till the sculptor's work is done.

HAL SUMMERS



# For the Retrospective Eye

By WILLIAM PLOMER

**A**MONG the many Festival shows the curious spectator should on no account miss the one put on by the Arts Council at the Victoria and Albert Museum and called 'Masterpieces of Victorian Photography, 1840-1900'. This is described as the largest retrospective exhibition of its subject ever staged. It has been arranged by Mr. Helmut Gernsheim from his wonderful collection, and he has brought his specialised learning to bear in the remarkably detailed catalogue, which lists not only photographs but books, apparatus, and associated items. He expresses a hope that his collection may one day form the nucleus of a National Museum of Photography. This is a most interesting suggestion, and there must be in this country quantities of hidden photographic treasure well worth preserving, whether for historical, aesthetic, or technical reasons. The invention of photography has surely been quite as revolutionary as that of printing, and nationalists can justly claim that English inventors did much to develop it. Fox Talbot patented the calotype process in 1841; Frederick Archer introduced the wet collodion process in 1851; and the invention of a gelatine emulsion in 1871 by Dr. Richard Maddox made instantaneous photography possible for the first time.

The exhibition naturally gives an important place to the triumphs of Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson. Their photographs, Mr. Gernsheim tells us, are today internationally regarded as the finest ever produced, and he remarks how amazing it is that 'the new art' of photography should have reached its highest peak in the mid-eighteen-forties. While dodging a dreary debate as to whether photography is, strictly speaking, an art, it is possible to congratulate Mr. Gernsheim as warmly upon his appreciation of the beauties of photography as upon his scholarship and enterprise. Here are the splendid productions of Mrs. Cameron, and the catalogue reminds us that, for her, photography was a 'divine art'; and further that Roger Fry, speaking of her portrait of Carlyle, thought that neither Whistler nor Watts had come near it, even in 'the logic of the plastic evocations'. Here are the works of 'the best photographer of children in the nineteenth century', Lewis Carroll (already the subject of a monograph by Mr. Gernsheim). Here are Roger Fenton's well-known Crimean scenes. And among the mass of things less well known are Francis Frith's views of Egypt, Peter Emerson's and Thomas Goodall's East Anglian peasants, Robert MacPherson's Roman scenes, and the works of Oscar Rejlander—including a nude which Mr. Gernsheim considers 'in every way equal to Etty's finest nudes'. This is too enthusiastic: whatever photography is or is not, it cannot be in every way equal to painting.

The 'period' interest of this exhibition is immense, and no historical era before 1840 can make quite the same direct appeal to the visual imagination as can the first decades of photography. Some of these early camera-men had been trained as painters, and the art of the

period shows its influence: there is often a strong Pre-Raphaelite flavour in their work, whether in such things as Henry White's 'Bramble and Ivy' (in which the bramble looks more like a hop-vine), or in straight portraiture, or in fancy compositions like Henry Peach Robinson's 'Bringing Home the May' or his 'The Lady of Shalott'.

Of this last, Robinson said: 'I think I succeeded in making the picture very Pre-Raphaelite, very weird, and very untrue to nature—I mean imaginative; but it was a ghastly mistake to attempt such a subject in our realistic art, and with the exception of an Ophelia done in a moment of aberration, I never afterwards went for themes beyond the limits of the life of our day'. The aberrant Ophelias and such things are curiosities, and although there is no reason why photography should be always realistic, it seems better that, even when uncommon taste and the knowledge and talent of a painter contribute to it, the photographer's ingenuity should be recognised as something other than the artist's vision.

The artist's vision may admittedly be of less value than the camera's, and the want of 'plastic evocations' in Count d'Orsay's sketch of Jenny Lind, made in 1847, evokes a redoubled respect for Octavius Hill. This wretched little work is included in a 'small supplementary display' (not of photographs) at the National Portrait Gallery of 'Some Leading Characters of 1851', which aims at indicating the richness and variety of British achievement in that year. It is rightly included, because, as the catalogue points out, the Gallery is a reference library of faces rather than a museum of art. This catalogue is garnished with lively biographical notes of just the kind likely to excite curiosity—where curiosity is excitable—

about the eminent of 1851 and their relations with one another. Here is a portrait, which does not belong to the Gallery, of the capable Paxton; here is the inflated, John Bull-like figure of Hudson, the Railway King; here is Robert Stephenson, the engineer, in a frock coat, standing among what used to be called 'foreground plants', with the Menai Bridge at his back; here are the enlightened Sir Henry Cole and the preposterous and obscurantist Colonel Sibthorp; the spaniel-faced Mrs. Browning ('No more Aurora Leighs, thank God!'); an excellent miniature by Samuel Laurence of Jane Carlyle; a drawing of Edward Lear in his twenties; Frith self-portrayed in his studio, with a glimpse of the new housetops in Pembroke Villas; Charles Kingsley, resting for once; and Dickens looking like what he was, a man of feeling and genius. Eighty faces to fascinate the retrospective eye—but perhaps there is more technical skill, yes, and not less sensibility, among the photographs at South Kensington.

The lectures on *Social Anthropology* by Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, which were broadcast in the Third Programme, have now been published by Cohen and West, price 8s. 6d.



'Summer' (1860), photograph by Oscar Rejlander of his wife  
From the Gernsheim Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum



## Living in an Atomic Age—III

# The Modern Mastery of Nature

By BERTRAND RUSSELL, O.M.

**I**T is the nature of man to be in conflict with something. Some men are victorious; others are defeated. Those who are defeated as a rule leave few or no descendants. It follows that the psychology which is transmitted tends to be that of victors, and that where there is a fifty-fifty chance of victory, optimism will cause the chance to be over-estimated. From the point of view of the survivors this is fortunate; the point of view of the vanquished is forgotten. The contests in which men are engaged are of three kinds—they are conflicts of: (1) men with nature; (2) men with other men; and (3) men with themselves.

## Three Conflicts

These conflicts are very different in their character, and with the history of man their relative importance is continually changing. The methods by which the conflicts are conducted are completely different. Conflict with nature is conducted by physical science and technical skill. Conflict with man is conducted by politics and war. The inner conflict which rages in an individual soul has been dealt with hitherto by religion. There are now those who say that they can deal with it scientifically by the methods of psycho-analysis, but I doubt whether these methods unsupplemented can supply all that is needed.

Of these three kinds of contests, the contest with physical nature is in a sense the most fundamental, since victory in this contest is essential to survival. Men who perish in a glacial epoch, or when hitherto fertile regions dry up, or when earthquakes engulf whole valleys, have lost their contest with physical nature; so have all those who die in famines and pestilences. Every victory over physical nature makes possible an increase in the numbers of the human species and has usually been used mainly to this end. But in proportion as man masters his environment his relations to his fellow men assume increasing importance, partly because the technique of mastery over nature involves social groups more coherent than those of the most primitive man, and partly because in proportion as the winning of daily bread becomes easier, a greater amount of energy can be set aside for the killing of enemies.

There comes, however, a moment in human evolution when, owing to the growth of technique, men can become richer through agreement with previous competitors than through extermination of enemies. When this stage is reached, what may be called the demands of technique require a cessation, or at least mitigation, of the conflicts of man with man. When this stage is reached (it is, in fact, the stage which mankind has reached at the present moment) the conflicts that most need to be resolved are the conflicts of man with himself. The long ages of the other two kinds of conflict have moulded human nature to a pattern formerly appropriate, but now technically obsolete. The ages of external warfare reflected themselves in an internal war in the soul. In this internal war in the soul, one part labelled the other 'sin', and determined to vanquish it. But the victory was never so complete as in external conflicts, and after every defeat, sin would again rear its ugly head. This unending warfare within, which was originally a reflection of the warfare without, now became, on the contrary, a source of the warfare without. Sin is only part of my nature, but it is the whole nature of my enemies. So at least the old-fashioned moralist believes. And therefore the soul which is not at peace with itself cannot be at peace with the world, and external wars have to continue in order to hide from individual men that the real war is within. For these reasons the war of man with himself is that which at the end of human evolution assumes supreme importance. Each kind of war should end in harmony. The conflict of man with physical nature is turned into a harmony in proportion as man learns the secrets of nature, and thereby becomes able to co-operate with her. The conflict of man with man serves a purpose so long as there is no possibility of adequate food supply for all. But when the conquest of nature has secured the possibility of adequate food supply for all, and when the growth of technique has made large-scale co-operation profitable, the conflict of man with man becomes an anachronism, and should end in a political and economic unification such as is sought by the advocates of world government. By

this means, an external harmony of man with man can be established, but it will not be a genuine harmony until men have achieved a genuine harmony within themselves, and have ceased to regard a part of themselves as an enemy to be vanquished. This, in a nutshell, is the history of man—past, present, and (I hope) future.

Man has had an existence which is long in relation to historical time, but short in relation to geological epochs. It is thought that he has existed for about 1,000,000 years. There are those (for example, Einstein) who think that he has very likely run his course, and that within comparatively few years he will have succeeded in exterminating himself with superb scientific skill. For my part, I find it hard to take this extreme view, but if we are to avoid such a gloomy conclusion to the history of our species, it is as well that we should learn to take account of the demands of man as man, rather than of this or that group of men. For it is man as man that is now threatened by his own inability to think of the species as a whole. Man, by the mastery of nature, has emerged gradually into a degree of liberty for which he seems as yet insufficiently adult. I think that if he is to be persuaded to abstain from suicide, it is as well that he should remember the bright promise of his youth and gradual progress, which is now in danger of an abrupt end.

Our first human ancestors were a very rare species. They lived under precarious conditions, exposed to the rigours of the weather, to the hostility of wild beasts, and to all the dangers of famine that could be caused by drought. They possessed no weapons, they probably had not mastered the use of fire, and if they had language of any sort, it must have consisted of no more than a few cries. Their one weapon in the struggle for existence was intelligence, and intelligence at first was very far from being so powerful a weapon as it has become.

The life of early men had advantages and disadvantages as compared with the life of civilised men in our own day. They were not over-crowded; they could roam for months without fear of meeting a stranger; physical necessity compelled them to take enough exercise, so that their livers were seldom out of order; they lived in small tribes of about a hundred individuals, where everybody knew everybody, and where on the whole there was friendship within the tribe. Occasionally, no doubt, they would find themselves in conflict with another tribe, the vanquished would be exterminated, and the victors would annex their territory with the feeling that battle was great fun. But probably at first such battles were rare, because human beings were few. The chief worry was as to food supply. It is estimated that each individual at that time required at least two square miles for his subsistence, and even with two square miles at his disposal he would often be hungry, and not infrequently die from lack of nourishment.

## The Apparatus of Civilised Man

Gradually, however, man emerged from these precarious conditions by various stages: weapons, fire, language, domestication of animals, and finally agriculture. These successive inventions and discoveries made possible the existence of civilised communities. They supplied the whole fundamental apparatus upon which civilised man subsisted for a very long time. From about 3,000 B.C. until less than 200 years ago there was no technical advance comparable to these. During this long period, man had time to become accustomed to his technique, and to develop the beliefs and political organisations appropriate to it.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, man entered upon a new phase, involving a change as fundamental as that involved in the adoption of agriculture; I mean, of course, machine production and the application of science to industry. Physical science, one may say, has existed as a powerful element in culture for about 350 years. Machine production has existed for about half that time. During the period since its invention it has shown itself to be a revolutionary force of quite amazing intensity. As yet this has been almost solely operative in man's relation to nature, but by revolutionising man's



# RUSSIAN PURGE

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relation to nature, it has destroyed the old equilibrium that existed in man's relation to other men and to himself. The revolutions that it demands in these two provinces are still to seek, and it is the fact that they are still to seek which is the main cause of the present troubles of the world.

The specially human activities which distinguish man from other animals all depend upon the lessening of his bondage to physical nature. So long as he had to spend all his time in food gathering, he could not devote much of his energy to war or politics or theology or science. These things are offshoots of the productivity of labour; they depend upon the excess of one man's production over one man's consumption of food. The greater this excess becomes, the more possible it becomes for a man to devote himself to politics and war and culture and such luxuries. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, Socrates and Plato, Buddha and Mohammed, Leonardo and Bach, all were only possible because the food producers could produce more than they could eat. But when one considers such a community as the United States in the present day, one finds a new phenomenon, namely that the great majority of the population enjoy very many things over and above the bare necessities of life, and yet, in spite of this, very large parts of the population are not engaged in production, whether agricultural or industrial. There are all the young people who are still being educated after they have become able-bodied. There are the armed forces. There are the journalists and all the people concerned in the production of reading matter. There are teachers, clergy, politicians and functionaries. All these people, from the point of view of primitive man, are luxuries, but a modern community would be impossible without at least some of them.

The liberation from bondage to nature has left men, in theory, free to choose their own ends to a degree that was never possible at any earlier time. I say 'in theory' because impulses incorporated into human nature by long ages of training and natural selection remain to determine human action independently of present physical needs. What a nation can spare from increasing its own numbers, it devotes only in part to its own welfare. To a very great extent it devotes its energies to killing other people or preparing to kill them or paying those who have helped to kill them in the past. The United States Government has announced that in the coming year, 20 per cent. of the total production of the country is to be spent on armaments.

The freedom from bondage to nature, therefore, is by no means wholly a boon. It is only a boon in so far as the resulting liberty of choice leads to an increase of those activities which are of use to mankind as a whole. But in so far as it merely liberates combative impulses it does no

good at all, but quite the opposite. Some people tell fine stories of the use of atomic energy in industry, and the economies which will result. Such economies, if the world remains politically what it is now, will do nothing but harm, since they will set free a greater part of human energy for the purpose of mutual destruction. This example illustrates the way in which our new mastery of nature brings new responsibilities and new duties. If men prove incapable of this adaptation, the whole movement of science and scientific technique will have proved a misfortune and perhaps will have taken man along a blind alley. While we were slaves to nature we could allow ourselves a slave mentality, and leave to nature decisions which now must be ours. This is difficult, since great parts of traditional religion and morality were inspired by man's bondage to nature, and the ways of thought and feeling that we acquire from our culture and from our early upbringing are hard to overcome, even when circumstances imperatively demand a different outlook.

I am not pretending that man is omnipotent; on the contrary, I shall be concerned in subsequent lectures with the limits of human power. But I am concerned to say that these limits are much less narrow for modern scientific man than they were for our ancestors, and that no precise boundary can be set, beyond which the limits cannot be made to recede. Innumerable facts of nature which once were inexorable data are now opportunities. Deserts are a challenge; Australian rivers can be made to flow from east to west instead of from west to east; before long it will be possible to demolish inconvenient parts of mountain ranges, and I dare say that by means of radio-activity the polar ice will be melted. It will not be long before it becomes possible to travel to the moon. We already know how to combat many kinds of pestilence, and we may hope to eliminate other kinds before long. Our nomad ancestors, while they watched their flocks by night, observed the stars in their inexorable courses, and believed themselves subject to the influences of celestial bodies. Wind and storm, drought and heat, comets and meteors and plagues filled their lives with awe, and they hoped to escape by means of humility. Modern man does not combat plagues by humility; he has found that they are to be combated by scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge, in fact, gives the means (where there are means) of combating any extra-human enemy, but it does not give the means of combating the human enemy without, or the part of the individual soul which leads it towards death rather than towards life. The problems of man's contest with nature, in so far as they are soluble, can be solved by physical science, but they are not the only problems with which man is faced. For his other problems, other methods are necessary.—*Home Service*

## The Half Possessed

In an appendix to the promised day  
Of glare and flies and sand in children's hair  
We stood by a deserted garden where  
Yellow day lilies stalked across the hay  
To where a shadow lay  
Slanting from the house. What lunacy  
Looked from those windows, half possessed and showing  
Their whites when a torn valance twitched in blowing:  
A blind hung like a cataract over one eye  
Fixed in apathy.

Up by the steps it was cool, the children had gone  
Through caves of briar beyond the pampas grass.  
I saw myself reflected in the glass  
Pane with tangled vines against the sun,  
And then another one  
Beyond: a strange man looking from the room  
Inside at me as though I were an otter,  
Some timid creature crept up from the water  
Who may not be disturbed lest he will come  
No more about the home.

I trespass too, he said and with these words  
Turned back into the empty room before  
Coming from a further garden door.  
When I was nine this lawn was large as Lord's  
And up there where the birds  
Chatter along the gutter it was higher

Than the church tower. I slept there; looking down  
I saw sparks from the red-hot-pokers blown  
Setting the hedge on fire.

This was not my home, I stayed here once,  
But all my life is but a chain to hold  
Those diamond drops darting their beam of gold,  
My last and early heirloom. What dumb chance  
Made me a prince  
Before the dew was dry? For here I fell  
In love and she was kind. Chestnuts in May  
With frills of candle white do not betray  
Their deep self secret hope. How could I tell  
What barbs would grow as well?

Who plucked my nut, whose the conquering hand  
That stroked my filly's flank, my Oaks home dancer,  
I do not know, nor do I think the answer  
Of any matter. Can you understand  
Groping up chimneys and  
On giddy ledges leaning to recover  
Your chasm haunted balance for twenty years?  
It was like that. The plain before me bears  
A bland and battered look where many wars  
Have rumbled down and gone. I am the lover  
His long fever over.

EDRICA HUWS



# Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

## Partisans of Peace

Sir,—Your correspondents, A. E. Coppard and W. T. Rodgers, have either got their tongues pushed well into their cheeks, or else they do not realise the real purpose of the so-called Stockholm Peace Campaign. They do not seem to appreciate that this campaign was planned in, and in its initial stages directed from, the same place as the invasion of South Korea, the attack upon French authority in Indo-China, and the attempt to overthrow the established government in Malaya. That place is the Kremlin. Nor do they seem to understand that when a communist talks about 'peace' he places an entirely different interpretation upon that word to a democrat. The truth of the matter is that in all its forms the World Peace Council is just another communist Trojan horse, or Trojan dove if you prefer it. It is in line of succession with the League against Imperialism, the International Class War Prisoners' Aid, the People's Convention, the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, and many others. Like these organisations, it will be discarded as soon as it has ceased to serve a useful purpose from Moscow's point of view.

Your correspondents would do well to read the words of the late Clara Zetkin, one of the foundation members of the Communist International. She said:

Such organisations must not be placarded in red with the words 'Communist Organisation'. On the contrary, they should bear the outward and visible signs of neutral organisation. . . . It is not merely desirable, but essential, that representatives of all schools of thought should be admitted to their controlling bodies. What really matters is that the aims and programme of these organisations should be dictated to them (without realising it) by the Communist Party.

One final point. The phrase 'Partisans of Peace' was coined, I believe, by a French communist leader called Rauol Calas, who knew much better than your correspondents the real meaning of the word 'partisan'. It is used to describe a person who is seeking to overthrow the regime of the country in which they live, if necessary by the use of armed force.

Yours, etc.,

House of Commons JOHN BAKER WHITE

Sir,—Mr. A. E. Coppard, whose letter you published last week, must either be naive to the point of fantasy or gullible to the same extent.

What right has he to insinuate that the desire for peace is not as strongly felt in the west as among those who are behind the Iron Curtain or among the citizens of the 'socialist state' which is obviously what Mr. Coppard calls the U.S.S.R. Peace is not to be obtained by the Stockholm manoeuvre or by internal propaganda within Russia, which aims at deluding Soviet citizens into the belief that the western democracies are composed of warmongers arming against a helpless and peace-loving Russia. It is this peace-loving Russia which alone has prevented the making of a peace treaty with Austria, it is this peace-loving Russia which, through Mr. Gromyko, has reduced the Meeting of Deputies in Paris to a complete farce. It is this peace-loving Russia which, having come into the war with Japan at the last possible moment, is now aiming to sabotage a peace treaty with that country.

Why, asks Mr. Coppard, should a socialist state aim at world domination? How refreshing is such innocence in a cynical age—and to support his argument he reminds us that under the U.N. Charter its members must not interfere in the internal affairs of each other—as the wicked U.S.A. did when it gave aid to Greece in fighting the communists—those charming people whose weapons included the abduction and corruption of innocent children. But Mr. Coppard's 'socialist state' is continually and persistently interfering in the internal affairs of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Albania and Hungary. Is this ignoring of such notorious facts by Mr. Coppard naivety, or is it to use Mr. Coppard's own phraseology, idiotic drivel?

Mr. Coppard might well be reminded of another 'socialist state', whose leader, the erstwhile 'buddy' of Joseph Stalin, so vociferously proclaimed his desire for peace, and whose followers, the Nazi leaders, were the most fervent supporters of all pacifist and peace movements outside Germany.

The vast majority of the citizens of the world demand a lasting peace. It will not be obtained because of but in spite of the 'Partisans of Peace'.—Yours, etc.,

Richmond

SIDNEY SALOMON

## A Progressive Game

Sir,—Mr. Evelyn Waugh is certainly right in accusing the list of 100 representative books selected for the National Book League exhibition of distressing omissions; these it was bound to have, and they distress the selectors more than their critics. There are absent from it many brilliant writers; among novelists, at least twenty fully as good as those we chose; some were better; a number of names will readily occur to anyone up in contemporary or recent fiction. Then, we had too few of the galaxy of poets writing thirty years back, too few historians, too few eminent literary essayists and critics (a notable omission was Sir Desmond MacCarthy), too little travel or adventure, no Buchan, no detective fiction, and, as Mr. Waugh complains, no theology. One result of all this is that no writer need feel insulted or depreciated by not being in our list; we never meant to compile a class-list, or to imply that the chosen were better than many of the unchosen; one glance at the gifted unchosen should disperse any such idea.

But it is not my concern to explain or defend our selections; what I am concerned to do is to rebut Mr. Waugh's implication of political bias (which he oddly supports by pointing out that at least half our list of writers are Tories; here he may be right or wrong; I take so little interest in the politics of writers that I seldom notice them). I am not authorised to speak for my two colleagues, but will do so for myself. Mr. Waugh says he is sure I shall not object to being described as 'progressive'. I do not object, because I have no idea what it means. If it means that, in common with most people, I hope the world will progress as time goes on in virtue, intelligence, sanity, culture and civilisation, and that I believe very many things in it to need changing and improving, then I am certainly progressive. If, as Mr. Waugh seems to think, it implies a leaning to the political 'left', then I am not progressive. I support a historic political party (temporarily in slight eclipse)

which is more progressive than some parties, less so than others. I belong to a historic church, which is more progressive than some churches, less so than others. I am neither of the left nor of the right; I prefer *auream mediocritatem*. It would certainly never occur to me to judge a writer, any more than a painter or musician, by his politics, if any. And as to a preference for atheism . . . well, as Mr. Waugh concludes, 'words fail me'.—Yours, etc.,

London, W.1

ROSE MACAULAY

## 'Regional' Novelists

Sir,—With regard to Mr. Frederick May's comment on my remarks apropos of regional novelists in a recent review, I am sorry I did not mention Verga in this context. But it seems to me that while Verga may be a regional novelist as far as his two best novels and some of his stories are concerned, his work as a whole extends beyonds this category. If he had completed the cycle of novels which was to begin with *I Malavoglia*, he would have written an Italian *Comédie Humaine*, and transcended the category altogether.

As to the neglect of Verga, I agree. But this neglect should be traced to its source. It seems to me that in his own country Verga's reputation has always been surrounded by a certain silence. No writer of his stature has received less in the way of critical or biographical study. Compare him in this sense with his close contemporaries, Chekhov and Maupassant. Verga's work raises many questions which are not answered by Lawrence's and V. S. Pritchett's appreciative essays. Why were his brilliant beginnings followed by a prolonged silence? It seems that they met with the kind of hostility which Hardy finally encountered with 'Tess' and 'Jude'—and with the same results. Light on Verga, and on his curiously truncated career as a novelist, is badly needed; but, as I have suggested, it can only be supplied by his countrymen, and it seems they are not particularly interested in the greatest novelist their country has so far produced. I know that two years ago nothing of Verga's was in print, or printing, in Italy. Inquiries in Rome and Venice produced the same result. Best-sellers of every nationality were available in translation, but of Verga's works there was neither trace nor promise.

Yours, etc.,

Clavering

DAVID PAUL

## Has the Motorist been 'Soaked'?

Sir,—Mr. Allen does not seem to understand that the grievance of the motoring community is the disparity between the *state's* income from motor taxation and the *state's* expenditure on roads. No one denies that local authorities also contribute towards the upkeep of the road system, but that is quite irrelevant to the point at issue and in any case motor vehicle owners are usually ratepayers, whilst the roads do not serve only the road users. Local authorities recover the cost of off-street car parks by charging a parking fee; if they do not it is because they are convinced that the provision of free parking accommodation is essential to the prosperity of the community. Some authorities illegally levy a charge for parking on the public highway too.



In reply to Mr. Allen's argument that nothing he buys in the shops of Cambridge is one penny the cheaper for being carried by road from London instead of by rail, let me say this: almost everything in the shops of Cambridge has been transported by road for some distance—long or local—either as a finished article or in course of manufacture; comparatively little, I imagine, has come from London, but a great deal from scattered supply centres ill-served by rail.

It is not a question of one form of transport being cheaper or dearer than another. Road transport performs an essential function which cannot conceivably be discharged by the railways. The public suffers as a result of the restrictions hampering road transport and pays in dearer costs the increased taxation imposed upon it. As for the cost of road accidents, here too the public pays, in higher casualty figures, for the continued neglect of the roads.

Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.2

K. L. KELLY

Sir,—May I be allowed to comment on the letter by Mr. J. E. Allen? His view that 'road transport throws a large part of its running costs on the public' is as untrue as his statement regarding the engineer and steel tyres versus rubber tyres is irrelevant.

The best part of what is spent on roads today would be incurred whether there were motor vehicles or not. When motor vehicles were the exception rather than the rule roads cost the equivalent in today's money of at least £40,000,000 annually. This year, after allowing for all road expenditure, including such items as traffic signals, car parks and police cars, there will still be a balance of £200,000,000 from motor taxation not spent on roads.

There is, of course, less friction between a steel wheel running on a rail than between a rubber tyre and a road. But this does not make rail transport cheaper than road! Taking all the factors into consideration, taxation included, road transport offers many advantages on the score of cheapness. This is why, for example, a journey by motor coach from London to Glasgow costs £1 10s. as against £4 1s. 9d. by train. Cheapness is also one of the reasons why the number of goods lorries has increased by 75 per cent. since the war.—Yours, etc.,

London, N.14

W. A. WAINWRIGHT

### The New Society

Sir,—Mr. Carr states: 'It is an illusion to suppose that human nature in itself provides a stimulus to work of a kind which will secure the performance of the tasks necessary to the existence of society. All that human nature does is to provide material which is capable of responding to external incentives of sufficient cogency and vigour'.

Mr. Carr is arguing in favour of the conscription (or 'direction' as it is more prudishly termed) of labour, at the prospect of which he declares that he is less horror-struck than some people. If Mr. Carr's premises were sound, it might, indeed, be an argument in favour of such conscription. But it seems to have truth only if we assume, quite arbitrarily, that certain highly sophisticated tasks are essential because we have also assumed that a certain highly sophisticated society must continue to exist. Applied to human society generally it is emphatically untrue. It is a poor description of, e.g., the domestication of animals and the invention of the plough to say that they were 'the response of material in human nature to cogent and vigorous external incentives'. And the very tasks which Mr. Carr would no doubt agree were necessary to the existence of our society have actually been in-

vented and became necessary through the free choice and action of individuals.

Whether we have the naked Economic Whip or the Welfare State, the *ultimate* incentive will be self-preservation—fear of want, if you like. That will ensure, as it has always ensured, the execution of the basic tasks of society. But when those basic tasks are assured, what right have the ruling minority to compel or direct their fellows against their will into certain jobs merely because they feel that society cannot exist without their performance?—Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.1

G. W. S. BARROW

Sir,—Harcourt's statement that 'we are all Socialists now' is referred to in Hansard in 1889 as having been made 'somewhere in the country', so it had nothing to do with his later Budgets. I have been unable to find where he made it.—Yours, etc.,

Oxford

D. H. MACGREGOR

### Open-Air Sculpture at Battersea

Sir,—Mr. Francis Watson should know better, not who I am but who is Monsieur Antoine Pevsner of Paris, that ingenious abstract sculptor—alas no relation whatsoever of mine—who has figured in many authoritative books on modern art for all the years in which I have been busily engaged on the writing of pedestrian books.

Mr. Francis Watson should also know only too well from personal experience how unpleasant it is to see one's name mixed up with that of a more distinguished namesake.

Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.3

NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

[Mr. Watson writes:

If a blunder can thus serve the general illumination, and the style of Professor Pevsner's protest attract more readers to his far from pedestrian publications, his mortification may, I trust, be assuaged.]

### The Wool of the West

Sir,—Apropos of Mr. Robert Douglas Brown's talk as recorded in 'Did You Hear That?' in the last number of THE LISTENER, readers may be interested to know that in the year 1698 evidence about teasels was given by witnesses before the select committee of the House of Commons on the Exportation of Wool Bill. This is not recorded in the journals of the House, but in the manuscript minute book of the committee clerk (Bodleian MS. Rawlinson A.86) which I am editing for the Royal Historical Society. The cloth industry at that time was anxious to prevent the illicit exportation of raw wool out of the country, which occurred by a process of outward smuggling, called 'owling'. When a clause was proposed to be added to this particular bill to prevent the exportation of teasels (the clerk spells it 'teasles', and I take Nuttall's spelling), witnesses were summoned to be heard.

Mr. Edward Woodcote of Axbridge told the committee that it was about twenty years since this nation was supplied with teasels from France, and that French teasels were better than English, although thirty or forty parishes about Axbridge sowed nothing but teasels and thereby maintained thousands of poor. Mr. John Hayes, a clothworker, said he had bought many packs of French teasels and that they were generally better than the English which were grown in Somerset, but that there were some which grew near Newbury and Reading which exceeded some French. The French teasels fetched £3 a peck, and he had known £7 given, but since the great improvement made in English teasels, the price had come down. Mr. Woodcote then asserted that he had advice from France that

they (the French) could supply all Europe with teasels.

That is all that the committee clerk recorded on this subject, and it is one of the many items of great interest in this remarkable and unique manuscript. I am glad to know that the superiority of English teasels, teazles and teasels has been maintained to this day.—Yours, etc.,

London, W.14

ORLO WILLIAMS

### War on the Moth

Sir,—Judging from the instructions on a tin of paradichlorobenzene supplied by a well-known firm of chemists, this chemical will not destroy the moth eggs. They state: 'It is impossible to destroy either eggs or larvae except by complete fumigation'. I asked them if fumigation by burning sulphur were permissible. They replied: 'Sulphur is not suitable as the fumes are liable to bleach coloured fabrics. If fumigation is deemed necessary it would be better to have this carried out by an expert. As stated on the container, the only perfect method of destroying the eggs is by fumigation'. This is a counsel of perfection difficult to attain, as experts are hard to find.—Yours, etc.,

Colyton

J. P. HODGE

## Two Indefinables

(continued from page 870)

results must concern misunderstandings. These are not to be despised. The word 'impressionism' means vastly different things according as you have a pen or a paint-brush in your hand—according as you are a wild young Rimbaud or a sophisticated Monet, or even a wilful and uncertain Debussy. It is a word that only comes into focus when set in the context of a specific medium, and of specific problems in that medium. When someone is involved in his own problems, the things going on over the wall are hardly likely to be studied attentively. And why should they be? Debussy echoes Mallarmé—but in an idiom in no way dictated by the poem. Indeed, I am certain that Mallarmé would not have disdained an 'Après-midi d'un faune' in the vein of, shall we say, the Siegfried Idyll; or a painting of his voluptuous creature by Boucher.

And yet 'impressionism', like 'symbolism', is a word we should hardly care to do without; in some way, it hits off a great deal that we prefer not to define too closely: not merely freedom from certain conventional practices, or uninterrupted devotion to aesthetic sensations, but within this a certain range of preferences determined (to some degree) by the experiments that are under way, and the discipline submitted to. I shall not presume to offer a definition of impressionism, any more than of symbolism, taken in these wider senses. I doubt if it can be done: there are too many penumbral extensions to an original idea. The best we can hope for is to find people who talk in a way not too different from ourselves about works of art we are generally familiar with. Then the words will look after themselves.—*Third Programme*

*Signature* is a finely produced 'quadrimestrial' of typography and graphic arts, edited by Oliver Simon; its latest number (13, new series: 9-17 North Street, Plaistow, London, E.13: price 6s. 6d.) contains an autobiographical article by Mr. Simon describing his early days in the printing trade and the work he did in company with Francis Meynell, Stanley Morison, Holbrook Jackson and others. There is also an illustrated article by Lynton Lamb about Dieppe and its artistic associations, the article being based on a visit to the town by Edward Ardizzone and Barnett Freedman.



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# The Listener's Book Chronicle

**Dance and the Soul.** By Paul Valéry. The original French text with a translation by Dorothy Bussy. John Lehmann. 10s. 6d.

**Reflections on the World Today** By Paul Valéry. Translated by Francis Scarfe. Thames and Hudson. 15s.

THE FIRST OF THESE two books is a dialogue in the Socratic manner. It may be read as complementary to Valéry's remarkable essay on poetry, 'Poésie et Pensée Abstraite', in which he stresses the importance, to the poet, of the actual process of writing a poem: this process is often more important to the poet than the finished poem. In *Dance and the Soul*, Valéry's dancer, and the idea of dance, stand for the creative imagination. The dancer, Socrates is made to say, is what Reason would dream—a world of measured forces and of studied illusions. This is, in fact, the world of poetry and of creative art in general. But if it is what Reason would dream, it is also against Reason; the dance denies reality, which 'unadulterated, instantly puts a stop to the heart. One drop of that icy lymph suffices to slacken in the soul, all the springs and throbbing of desire . . .'. The unconscious movement of limbs is a symbol of intuition. And it is much more than this: in the dance the body wants to escape from itself, 'it wants to play at the soul's universality'. This soul has 'no other resource than truth'. The poet has no other resource, either. Valéry knew this; he knew that Mallarmé's 'pure poetry' was not enough.

In this philosophic dialogue which has a lyrical quality, Valéry makes a plea for the creative imagination; for escape from commonplace, everyday reality—from what Socrates, in *Dance and the Soul*, calls the tedium of living, 'that tedium, in short, the stuff of which is nothing else than life itself, and which has no other second cause than the clear-sightedness of the living man'. But Valéry the poet does not run away from reality; for it is the poet's business to 'give depth and animation to the world's miserable mass'. In *Dance and the Soul*, Valéry examines obliquely, through the conversation of three men watching a dancer, the nature of creative imagination. It is significant that creative mind is represented by the physical—a dancer. The creative processes are ambiguous, of double nature.

Valéry's was an analytical as well as a creative mind. In *Reflections on the World Today* his clear intellect is turned on the hard but elusive facts of history and politics. The creative mind is often against politics and its parties, at least antipathetic to both. This tendency of mind is strongly apparent in these essays which range in time from 1895 to 1939. There is one thing that concerns Valéry most, and that is man's inability to cope politically with the swift and tremendous changes involved in the development of mechanistic and technical civilisation, and his failure to realise that the world is really now one world, that there are no longer localised conflicts and crises; it is necessary, Valéry says, to understand that nothing at all can be foreseen in this political world. But the rulers of Europe were bred on the past and can do nothing but repeat the past. This has to be changed, for 'we are entering into the future backwards. . . . Can we from now on act, think, write, and live as if what is to come cannot hope to be made intelligible or be usefully defined by what has been?' At the moment, it seems that the answer is a

bleak 'No'. These essays are, on the whole, an indictment of contemporary civilisation; they gain in force and penetration from the detachment and irony with which many of them are written.

**Schubert.** By Alfred Einstein. Cassell. 25s.

**Schubert: Thematic Catalogue of all his works in chronological order.** By Otto Erich Deutsch. Dent. 45s.

Schubert-lovers are fortunate. Here, published within a fortnight of each other, are two highly important contributions to the knowledge and understanding of the Viennese master. (He really is 'the Viennese master', for as Dr. Einstein points out, 'of all the great "Viennese masters", from Johann Joseph Fux to Johannes Brahms, Schubert is the only real native of Vienna'.) Professor Deutsch's invaluable compilation, which will take its place beside Dr. Einstein's own edition of Köchel's *Mozart-Verzeichnis* and Schmieder's recent *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis*, though planned on slightly more modest lines, is above all a contribution to knowledge; it is the complement to his *Schubert: a Documentary Biography*, and the two volumes together represent the fulfilment of half-a-century's work on every aspect of Schubert bibliography.

A thematic index is essentially a book for scholars; Dr. Einstein's study is rather for the ordinary intelligent music-lover. It is to some extent a counterpart of his *Mozart: His Character—His Work* which a LISTENER reviewer, according to the jacket of the present book, described as 'one of those rare books in which a great scholar saturated in a subject unbends, sits back, and writes easily about it'. With certain reservations, that might be said of *Schubert* too. This is a rich book: a full study, not of Schubert's life—the biographical parts are either introductory or background filling-in—but of his total work, doing full justice to the operas, the church music and the unaccompanied choral music among which so much beautiful, thoroughly Schubertian music lies buried and unknown to the multitude who are familiar with at least a considerable proportion of the songs and instrumental music. It gains by avoidance of the customary classification by categories; Schubert's music, despite its range and variety, is all cut from the same stuff; and Dr. Einstein's method enables him to show the gradual maturing of the style, the relation between (for instance) a song and a piano sonata written at nearly the same time. It is packed with information, shot through with fine critical *aperçus*. No reader, no matter how well he knows his Schubert already, will put down this volume without knowing more or without understanding better what he knows already.

Nevertheless Einstein's *Schubert* is not quite on the level of Einstein's *Mozart*. He is a great scholar but Schubert is not one of the subjects to which he has devoted arduous scholarship. *Mozart* was a sort of paragon to the edition of Köchel; no comparable spadework has preceded this book. This time the author, thoroughly as he knows his subject, had not been 'saturated'. Consequently there are some odd little slips. On the so-called 'Adagio and Rondo', Op. 145, Dr. Einstein contrives in two places (footnote on p. 146, and p. 234) to make almost every mis-statement that could be made, even giving the wrong opus-number in one place.

The facts are stated correctly by Professor Deutsch. Again, he asserts of an early *Fantasia* for piano duet that 'the last sixteen bars of the *primo* part are missing'; he had only to consult the *apparatus criticus* of the Collected Edition to learn that they are not missing. And oddly enough, on this point Deutsch for once is wrong too, though not so completely wrong as Einstein; he has consulted the *apparatus criticus* but a little too hurriedly.

We must not blame Dr. Einstein for being made to talk about side-drums when he means kettle-drums, or for the ingenious yet not really acceptable translation of *Singspiel* as 'ballad opera'. But on the whole he has been much better served by Mr. David Ascoli than by some of his previous translators.

**Life in Lakes and Rivers**

By T. T. Macan and E. B. Worthington. Collins. 21s.

**Animals without Backbones**

By Ralph Buchsbaum. Pelican, 2 volumes. 5s.

Vertebrate animals obtrude themselves on our attention with such success that there is some excuse for failing to realise that most members of the animal kingdom are inconspicuous, and almost wholly unobserved by those who do not know where to look for them. Recent publications, however, are making it possible for the general reader to gain a well-balanced view of the life around him, and in this connection the latest volume in the 'New Naturalist' series is particularly welcome, for it deals with a subject which, as the dust-cover rightly reminds us, has been unduly neglected in natural-history publications.

The freshwater fauna lacks the dramatic range of form and colour which stimulates exploration of the sea-shore, while the marine biologist has been fortunate in the official support which he has received, support which was formerly much less easy to secure for freshwater research. The Admiralty, for example, which has played a major role in the development of oceanographical studies, could hardly be expected to concern itself with inland waters, while the Office of Works seems to have decided that its interest was confined to the surface layers, an arrangement which, while administratively tidy, was not calculated to further fundamental investigations. In 1931, however, with aid from government and other sources, the laboratory of the Freshwater Biological Association was successfully established in a pseudo-medieval castle on the banks of Windermere, and the present book, being written by its first full-time Director and one of the senior staff, is in some sense a progress report on its work, but it is also much more than this, for here are woven together with ease and clarity the diverse strands which have gone to the building-up of freshwater biological studies in this country and elsewhere.

It is a particular merit of the book, both for the student and for the general reader, that the authors deal first with the fundamental principles of the organisation of freshwater habitats, and that the adaptations of the plants and animals and the complex interrelationships which determine the productivity of the waters are set clearly within a sound ecological framework. Its lively detail will fascinate all its readers, and the breadth of its scope may well surprise those who are unfamiliar with the range of interest of the modern biologist. The authors take us down



to the bottom of Windermere, for example, analysing both the chemistry and the history of mud cores obtained with one of the ingenious pieces of apparatus constructed in their laboratory, and drawing our attention to the disappearance of deposits of pine pollen associated with the arrival of Neolithic man, and to the appearance of appreciable sewage as the romantic influence of the Lake poets made itself felt. They discuss the many technical applications of freshwater biology, and here the fisherman will read with particular interest their review of the controversial problems of stocking, cropping and pollution.

The value of their discussion is enhanced throughout by their repeated insistence on the immense gaps in our knowledge and on the need for further work in all of these fields. 'The main conclusion to be drawn from a comparative study of river faunas is that a great deal more work must be done', they observe, while ponds they find 'difficult to describe . . . as they . . . have not been studied much', an ironical commentary on a field of activity so highly esteemed by young biologists and their School Certificate examiners. It is hardly necessary to add that the book is illustrated with the lavishness which we have come to expect of this series, and that there is a well-chosen selection of photographs of characteristic members of the flora and fauna. Many of the coloured plates are selected to illustrate habitats rather than organisms, however, and in these both sky and water tend to appear in shades of blue which may prove a trifle startling to field biologists, who are more likely to appreciate the depth of experience which underlies the authors' claim that one of the advantages of freshwater biology is that a day's pond-dipping is not rendered fruitless by rain!

Those readers who wish to relate the freshwater fauna to the rest of the animal kingdom, or at least to that 95 per cent. of it which lacks a vertebral column, are conveniently provided for by the issue of Dr. Buchsbaum's book, already well known to zoologists, in a two-volume 'Pelican' edition. Here, at a fraction of its original price, is the whole work, with its lucid account of the organisation and life-history of invertebrate animals, and with its prodigal supply of illustrations which, despite some slight blurring of texture and modelling in the photographs, have lost surprisingly little in their reduction. From both of these books there emerges the lesson that however unfamiliar the invertebrate world may seem, its impact on human affairs may be considerable, while Dr. Buchsbaum, with commendable detachment, gives neat expression to the invertebrate point of view with a photograph of a boiled lobster which, so the caption informs us, was reduced to an empty exoskeleton about half an hour after the picture was taken.

### Malay Sayings. By C. C. Brown.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. 18s.

During the last twenty years, the oral literature of Malaya has come increasingly to western notice. Sir Richard Winstedt's *Malay Proverbs* is a recent case in point while earlier translations of Malay love-songs—although not always very happy—had suggested the astonishing reserves of poetry latent in this charming people.

Mr. Brown's *Malay Sayings* is the latest contribution to this cultural stimulation. His modestly-stated objective is to provide the English resident in Malaya with ways of meeting Malay peasants on their own ground and he reveals the nature of the problem in a quotation from Clifford and Swettenham's dictionary. The Malay language, they point out, is like French an essentially diplomatic form of communication. It is 'admirably adapted for concealing the

feelings and cloaking the real thoughts. Not even in French is it possible to be so polite or so rude, with every appearance of exaggerated courtesy, as in Malay'.

Mr. Brown has accordingly assembled and translated the actual Malay phrases for more than 1,200 current expressions. The sentences are arranged in terms of their English equivalents, and as a result the student can gain immediate access to what might otherwise be baffling aspects of the Malay mind. He will now know, for example, that if a Malay peasant says 'The kitten has turned into a tiger', he is not referring to a fancied metamorphosis. His real meaning is that a certain person has gone up in the world. If he says 'No sooner is the bird-lime taken up than the night-herons arrive', the phrase means that he has been 'sold again'. Similarly, to suggest that someone is 'playing the deaf rhinoceros' is to imply that he is being quite unusually pig-headed. Even the British administrator charged with punishing the guilty will be well advised to watch his step, for the Malays concerned will expect his decision to be 'the heat of the sun on an open plain'.

To regard *Malay Sayings*, however, as merely a phrase book would be seriously to underestimate its importance. Just as Arthur Waley's *Uta* was ostensibly a simple key to Japanese grammar but actually a subtle introduction to Japanese poetry, Mr. Brown's collection has the further function of opening the door on a whole way of fresh, spontaneous living. The simple poetic symbols which pervade Malay talk are drawn from the lush vegetation and animal-infested hillsides which comprise their daily background, and as a result the whole Malay scene comes vividly to life through these forms of village conversation. But even more significantly, we can gain an insight into Malay attitudes and values, their current assumptions and normal ways of thought. Their admiration for girls, for example, is charmingly expressed in the phrases 'like newly tinted gold', 'like polished ivory' and 'wax newly rolled', while their amused and tolerant attitude to sexual behaviour is seen in phrases such as 'The eyes close in sleep but the pillow stays awake' (an unfaithful spouse), 'The coconut has been bored by a squirrel' (defloration), 'An elephant with two mahouts' (a woman with two lovers) and 'The mortar has gone to look for the pestle' (a forward woman). Other studies may conceivably provide the reader with more information, but few are likely to convey so admirably the very feel of Malay life.

### The Blessed Pastures

By Wilfred Rowland-Childe.

Lotus Press. 2s.

Farewell, Aggie Weston

By Charles Causley.

A Distant Star. By Charles Higham.

Hand and Flower Press. 1s. each.

Even well-established poets are finding it difficult nowadays to interest reputable publishers in their work. One welcomes, therefore, the adventurous spirit of one or two small firms which are issuing, at very reasonable prices, well-produced little books by poets, known and unknown, who deserve a public hearing.

The first in this field was the Lotus Press, which has published a new book by a poet whose work, though represented in *The Oxford Book of Mystical Verse* and in the Penguin *Anthology of Religious Verse*, has been too long out of print. Wilfred Rowland Childe's work, written in unfashionable but praiseworthy admiration of Rossetti, William Morris, and the French Symbolists, has perhaps by its very nature—meditative, spiritual, lyrical—tended to

be overlooked in favour of the noisier and more flamboyant realists of our earnestly 'contemporary' schools. Mr. Childe would be considered 'archaic' by most modern poets, and 'sentimental' too. But these attributes, when seen at their best, as they are in his poetry, are desirable and worthy ones; and he possesses a sense of style which is rare. He is a traditionalist in the finest sense, a craftsman of taste and integrity.

*The Blessed Pastures* is a book of many lovely and neglected things, written by a true poet who has preferred, in the place of this world to build a securer and happier universe of his own, which has its own life and its own laws. This, surely, is the supreme test of poetic power, the ability to imagine and to construct a new world from the ruins of the old:

Rising above the vale the wondrous walls  
Of the new Abbey shine with faith that spurns  
The faithless past; the first faint sunshine falls  
In peace, the great apse burns,

White as a dream shaped By the holy mind  
Of one who broods on beauty, like a heart  
Of some awakening flower, a vision shrined  
And guarded, set apart.

Charles Causley is a vigorous interpreter of the sailor's life: he is direct, but musical, and is seen at his best in ballads-like 'Nursery Rhyme of Innocence and Experience'.

Though Mr. Higham's immaturity is evident in his rather limply elegiac strains, the firmness that at present is lacking may eventually be learnt, as is shown in his translations from that master of evocative precision, Mallarmé.

### The Greeks. By H. D. F. Kitto.

Pelican. 1s. 6d.

Professor Kitto is the author of a distinguished book on Greek tragedy which charmed the reader by its intimacy with its subject. It had something of the quality of an adventure of the writer's mind among the masterpieces he discussed. This personal method is not so successful in the new book. Of course it contains many interesting pages and is based on wide knowledge. But there is a take-it-or-leave-it, an it-is-so-because-I-tell-you quality about the book which exposes the reader to all the risks of a personally conducted tour under an over-enthusiastic guide.

Professor Kitto's thesis—for his somewhat *décousu* book has a thesis—is that the Greeks were, in all they did, wonderful; much greater statesmen than the Romans and habituated to such subtlety of expression that no modern language can translate their terms. In the words of his opening sentence, 'they shewed for the first time what the human mind was for'. This dubious formulation of their achievement is justified by sweeping assertions. 'For centuries' (before the Greeks) 'millions of people had had experience of life—and what did they do with it? Nothing'.

The necessity of unqualified eulogy involves our author in numerous contradictions. Discussing Homer he shows awareness that historical processes take time to mature. He excuses Homer for having no systematic theology on the ground that 'the very idea of systematic thought has not yet come into existence'. But on another page we are asked to believe that the Greeks, when they descended from the northern mountains, brought with them the periodic style of composition. 'The Romans seem to have achieved the periodic style by sheer determination and courage: the Greeks were born with it'. Again many pages are devoted to the superior political wisdom of the Greeks in choosing to live in tiny city-states and in sending out colonies without founding empires. We read on and find that Athens is praised for



having 'built up the only truly Greek empire that ever existed'. Nor is the basis of this achievement obscured. 'It was the political union of the dozen small poleis in Attica which led the way to Athenian greatness'. As a causerie

the book is not without merits, but it nowhere approaches a systematic interpretation of the achievement of the Greeks. Indeed, on the author's philosophy of history, it would be improper to expect any such thing. It is of interest

to try and understand how the Greek character was formed. But this is the point from which Professor Kitto begins. No event in their history really puzzles him for he has the clue. 'The real explanation is the character of the Greeks'.

## New Novels and Short Stories

*A Last Sheaf.* By Denton Welch. Lehmann. 12s. 6d.

*Christina Claimed.* By Giles Romilly. Putnam. 10s. 6d.

*The Brigand.* By Giuseppe Berto. Secker and Warburg. 9s. 6d.

*Ever Thine.* By Hester Chapman. Cape. 15s.

**I**N approaching Denton Welch's last volume it is better perhaps to avoid the obituary note. His achievement is sufficiently solid to make assessments of promise unnecessary. The ratio between gifts and achievement is in any case always unpredictable. Yeats, for example, may well be the greatest writer in English of this century, yet could he, at any time in his career, have been described as a highly or variously gifted man? *A Last Sheaf* is a final garnering of Denton Welch's output as poet, prosaist and painter. Despite the oddity and charm of his painting, the hint of something more in his poetry, it is clearly the imaginative prose which ranks as his permanent achievement. He is, at his best, a subjective writer. The most notable item in the present volume, a seventy-page fragment of a novel, is plainly autobiographical in inspiration. If completed it might well have been one of the really memorable novels of adolescence. Without any apparent hesitation or effort, the author achieves the perfect transposition of personal experience on to the impersonal plane of fiction. The narrative moves haphazardly, the picture builds itself up as if by accident; the result is always compellingly clear. It remains a highly personal picture of Welch's youth at an art school in the suburbs, but it reaches out into all adolescent experience.

There are many autobiographical writers today, but are there any with Welch's gift of transposition, of seeing himself as a third person? Whether he had the novelist's other gift of seeing someone else seems to me doubtful. He had not the moral and emotional intuition of other people's acts and motives which seems to me so conspicuous a quality in another new writer, Doris Lessing. His exploration of other people's lives tends to retreat into quaintness, to end in echoes of the early stories of *Walter de la Mare*. The stories may make one feel that he was primarily a novelist. Yet one of those here printed, 'Memories of a Vanished Period', has a startling glitter and depth. Here his search for oddity meets the craziness of a day in London during the air raids, and the two elements clinch and balance, hallucination meets reality in a precarious yet perfect poise. This story is one of the real records that will float down on oceans of submerged print. It is a perfect instance of the unexpectedness of Welch's gifts. Whatever may be thought of the other stories they can scarcely be accused of dullness. It seems that Welch was incapable of writing a dull page. Not one is to be found in the present collection.

Whether the social set, depleted and cramped by circumstances, still retains enough vitality to engage a novel is doubtful. I do not think *Christina Claimed*, an interesting and highly debatable experiment, will resolve the doubt. It is, in a sense, a post-war social panorama. Christina Fattle is nineteen years old in 1945. Vaguely distinguished, she belongs to a group of girls of good family, attractive, 'musical', and somewhat hesitant on the brink of life in an uncharted world. Christina sails out on

the most uncharted course of all, experiencing a muddled idyll at a coast resort, yielding absent-mindedly to an impetuous lover, drifting away from him, subjected to experimental encounters by good 'matches', drifting away from them, to be suddenly at last 'claimed' and taken in tow by a displaced person, a Polish painter whom she self-sacrificingly—and unhappily ever after—marries.

Seurat's blobs have never been of much use to any other painter; and neither, I suspect, can the Jamesian fog or the Meredithian glint be successfully employed by another writer. I do not think Giles Romilly's style is derivative, but it seems to me to attempt the effects, by its own means, of both those masters. The writing is perpetually suggesting a seizure of subtleties through vagueness. For instance Christina muses on her idyllic summer at Merridge:

She was not sure what it was that she understood, for the act of understanding seemed itself to blur her thoughts, which became a sequence of images, very calm, still, and full of summer. These images serious and gay, overlapped and passed behind each other like coloured cards, with a sort of imprecise precision, a meaning which was also an illusion, as if they were demonstrating some conjuring-trick of the summer.

Elaborate settings alternate with vacuum, complicated situations end in gaps. Christina is possessed by her first lover, lives with him daily. They part. We pursue her cloudy consciousness for a whole winter and find in it scarcely a random thought of George, who drops out of the novelist's picture altogether, to be retrieved, as awkwardly as a napkin from under the table, later. George is altogether a doubtful figure. Is he an author's abstraction, autobiographical? There is a distinct gap between his mental status and the naive reactions with which the author rather wilfully endows him. George is one of a number of characters who are elaborately evoked and who fail quite to answer the summons. Notably there is Tante Mélanie, a familiar type of dragon who, the moment she takes the stage, ceases to exist. On the other hand, Christina's mother, whose old age is a sudden, fortuitous encounter with the emptiness of herself and her world, seems to exist in a more solid dimension than Christina herself. The pattern of the novel as a whole is a distribution of partly withdrawn emphases and gives the effect of a drawing too much rubbed. But however much one questions what the author does, what he is at remains a matter of continual interest. Having made a display of all his limitations, he should have little difficulty in finding their strength.

*The Brigand* is a simple, straightforward tale of a not unfamiliar kind, the tale of an Italian soldier returned from service in Africa, hardened by experience, embittered perhaps, but with a will to improve his lot in his Calabrian village, and with it the lot of the people who have endured poverty for generations as if it were an inescapable tradition. Michele quarrels with a local rich man, who is later shot. Rather too inevitably, Michele is arrested and found guilty. He escapes from prison, serves with the partisans

in the liberation of north Italy, and returns to his village reinstated. But he organises one of the peasant occupations of an idle estate; the land-owners have him arrested on the old charge; he escapes again, and turns brigand after the old Calabrian pattern. The narrator is a boy who hero-worships and hates Michele by turns, whose sister runs away with the brigand and is involved in his inevitably violent end. The story is told with simplicity and tension. It is often touching, but I do not think it attains the tragic meaning that was intended, largely because Michele is drawn to a too elementary pattern. He is there to illustrate an issue. He never really emerges as an individual from his aura of bitterness, idealism and brigandage. The background too has a somewhat hasty and elementary quality, compared with the incisiveness of some other Italian writers. Even Silone, warped as he may be, can carry more complexity than this. The most memorable episode in the book, the account of a peasant seizure of land, stands outside the narrative. Its view of the peasants, the indolence of whose resignation 'had grown upon them through centuries of slavery and seemed to attend them even in revolt', has the knowledge and conviction which is always missing from the observer's report.

*Ever Thine* is what is commonly called a novel on the grand scale. I should say it is of terrifying proportions. It seems to be an attempt to reproduce the drama, the panorama and the detail of a Victorian three-decker. Unfortunately, in avoiding all the vices of her well-known exemplars, Miss Chapman seems to have narrowly escaped most of the virtues as well. The setting is an Edwardian preparatory school. Victoire, the presiding figure, is a *femme terrible*. The type is frequent in fiction and drama today, and seems to be an established successor to the *femme fatale* of earlier days. Victoire dominates her husband, runs his school, and adopts a nephew and niece, whom the pressure of her will eventually and respectively reduces to suicide and a convent. A simple plot, upholstered to bursting point with all the daily detail of school routine and staff room commonplace. Dullness and boredom are essential material to the novelist, but only if they sting him into some form of resentment and brilliance. In the present case they seem to inspire the author with an inexhaustible nostalgia. All might yet have been comparatively well, had it not been for the choice of narrator, who is a rejected adorer of Victoire and a master at the school. To come the heavy male, for six hundred pages, is a feat which surely no lady novelist should permit herself. And Victoire, seen through the eyes of love, fascinations and bewilderment, never enchains or bewilders. Yet pains and skill and thoroughness are evident on every page. *Ever Thine* has for me the alarming quality of a scale model of a liner made entirely of matchsticks, or a reproduction of the Taj Mahal in white soap. It is a work of extraordinary fidelity, but what the object of its fidelity might be I could not guess.

DAVID PAUL



# CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent critics

## TELEVISION

### 'Positively Worth Seeing'

CERTAINLY IT IS a great pleasure to speak ill of an entertainment that one has not enjoyed. Such was—and probably still is—the opinion of that acerbic French critic, Paul Léautaud, who lavishes on his thirty-eight cats, his twenty-two dogs, his goat, and his goose the affection he cannot feel for the human race, or its achievements in the theatre. But, adds M. Léautaud, it is equally a great pleasure to praise something which has given one delight. I feel the same way myself; and it is with a bounding heart that I record the fact that the Music-Hall programme from the Bournville Theatre, Birmingham, last Saturday evening—the first Music-Hall programme produced in the Midlands—was an enormous improvement on anything of its kind I have yet seen on television. It was positively worth seeing, and listening to.

What was the secret of its merit? There was nothing especially clever about its presentation. Indeed, the compère, though he had an agreeable confidence, was on the whole dull. Now and again he was pleasantly interrupted by Ben Warriss, who made some atrocious puns and very bad jokes with an unabashed recognition of their weakness that to a large extent redeemed them: but there was nothing here to put a stamp of individuality on the programme. The various turns were embedded in the usual bevy of dancing girls, who were neither better nor worse than usual; and the Birmingham audience showed none of that restraint and sense of pro-

portion which we have long ceased to expect from the television audiences of the south. The mere appearance of some comparatively unknown personage provoked from it frenzies of applause that Irving at the height of his fame would have thought excessive, and which might surprise even Mr. Danny Kaye. By judicious

command. He is not one of those who can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. On the other hand, he does not make a sow's ear out of a silk purse. And that, certainly, is something.

This, as I have said, was the first Music-Hall programme to be televised from the Midlands, and I suppose that more money was spent on it than is customary. Anyway, the artists appearing in it were of distinctly more perceptible talent than we usually have the chance of seeing on our screens. Miss Betty Driver is perhaps only an imitation of Gracie Fields; but the imitation is quite good. Dancing in television is nearly always disappointing; it becomes a mere flurry of skirts, and the figures move too quickly for the camera. But Mr. Rey Overbury's unambitious steps to the music of 'The Third Man' were not without quality. Perfect timing in the speech of an actor causes each word he speaks to set up in the hearer a slight emotional inharmony which makes one wait eagerly for the next for its resolution: each tap of Mr. Overbury's foot had a similar effect. Mr. Norman Evans, with his huge body, his slow, Northern speech, his cloth cap, and engaging simplicity, is a music-hall comedian in the great tradition. His humour, as when he, with



'The Salzburg Marionettes' in a scene from 'The Life of Mozart', televised on May 25

selection, by the careful balancing and contrast of separate acts, by the creation of a dominant atmosphere, it is possible to raise a programme to a standard higher than that of its individual turns. But this was not done here. We have not discovered in Mr. Richard Afton, who directed the show, a producer of genius whose achievement is independent of the materials at his

cowardly gallantry, tries to forgo his turn in the dentist's waiting-room, rises out of character, situation, and observation. It is not a matter of gags and wisecracks. And Les Compagnons de la Chanson can, in their songs, not always advisedly translated into English, set all the church bells of France ringing in gaiety or sadness.

If Les Compagnons de la Chanson are stirring



'The Passing Show': scene from 'The Years of Change' (1910-1920), the second part of a chronicle of fifty years of show business. Stella Moray and ladies of the chorus in 'How do you do, Miss Ragtime?'



Tony Quinn as 'Joxer' Daly, outside the window, listens to John Kelly as 'Captain' Jack Boyle; and Shela Ward as Juno Boyle, in the televised version of 'Juno and the Paycock'



and moving in their music, so was the second instalment of Rex Rienits' 'The Passing Show'. Particularly in its conclusion. It was the year 1920. Wave on wave of chorus girls from 'Going Up' swept to the camera, singing and moving with a vitality that today we see only in Miss Cicely Courtneidge; the scene passed to a wedding, and then to the young Labour candidate who is one of Mr. Rienits' characters setting out to win thousands of votes for his party. These three scenes, separate in themselves, were held together by an emotional tension, a feeling of a start, a beginning, a dawn of a new hope and new era, whose poignancy is the greater because we have seen the end of them for ever.

There were some fine moments in 'Saint Joan', with Miss Constance Cummings a simple, earnest Maid, and Mr. Felix Felton, implacable, terrible, yet with a comprehending intellect, an excellent Archbishop of Rheims. I will not maintain, however, that my attention did not occasionally flag. Seán O'Casey's 'Juno and the Paycock', in a smooth production, very well spoken, retained its rich poetry of the poor. I had seen 'Hassan' just previously; and it seemed to me the streets of Dublin were more golden than the road to Samarkand.

HAROLD HOBSON

## BROADCAST DRAMA

### Many Waters

MILTON'S 'COMUS' SHOULD FALL like a blessing from the air. So it did—or some of the time. Only a few bricks fell with it. 'Enter Commus', said the narrator obligingly at one point and though he corrected himself at once, poor chap, the idea that this was an affair of sweet Jacobean and strange phantoms discoursing in a grove was abruptly replaced by a mental picture of anxious script-reading in a stuffy studio.

Some of the speaking was, as a matter of fact, uncommonly good; Derek Hart as the Elder Brother, Alan Wheatley, Marius Goring, Diana Maddox and Denise Bryer felt the rhythm of the verse and the beauty of the diction. A tiny 'fluff' ought not to matter now and again. But it only shows what an exacerbated and unnatural aural sensitivity one brings to radio, quite unlike the tolerant ear which listens in a theatre (hence, all those furious letters about lady announcers, etc., etc.). Speech in fact is listened to through a microphone with the hypercritical attention one usually reserves for chamber music or Festival Hall concerts, where a mild lapse of intonation, let alone a wrong note, is considered to 'wreck the performance'.

The lesson to be drawn from this Miltonic experience should I daresay have been present in my mind during 'The Knights of the Round Table'. The truth is, the combination of the names of Cocteau and Auden probably raised hopes altogether inimical to easy enjoyment of the piece. As in so many Cocteau plays, half the fun was the initial destruction of the nineteenth-century romantic conception of the legend in order to substitute for it a neo-romantic Cocteau conception—the usual half-serious, half-tragic, classical drama in the guise of farce and *vice versa* which is this amusing French writer's way of addressing himself to a semi-sacred subject. I have no doubt that on a stage or a screen where we might check the impression given by the words against a set of images, the effect would have been totally different. Here, it all too often sounded banal, whereas surely what was intended was a deliberate banalisation—something quite different, analogous to modern dress for antique tragedy. Without vision a whole dimension was lacking—fatally, it seemed to me. We

were, however, glad of the chance to hear it.

The same may be said for the James Laver-Rayner Heppenstall trot through that strange work of Villiers de L'Isle Adam, the tragedy of 'Axël'. One is never likely to see it performed and only the very diligent could possibly get through it in print; so a potted version was welcome. Just an accident perhaps that some composer of genius did not fasten upon it and, preserving it in music, make its characters as familiar to us as raging bores of the opera house. All things considered, Veronica Turleigh and Paul Scofield extracted a good deal of juice. This was one of the curiosities which the Third Programme hands out in generous measure.

I have missed some crucial episodes in the soap opera family sagas. But I made up for it, punishing myself cruelly with 'Easy Money', a matinee on Wednesday of quintessential suburbanity, in which a repellent family was heard (and at what unbelievable length of nasty wrangling!) reacting unpleasantly to the news that they had, then hadn't, then had again, won a lot of money from a football pool. I think this affected me adversely when I at last tried to catch up with the Dales by listening to our old friend Synopsis. My reactions reminded me of Samuel Butler's story of Fuseli who was travelling in a coach when a gentleman sitting opposite said, 'Mr. Fuseli, I believe you are a celebrated painter. It may interest you to know that my daughter paints upon velvet'. In the greatest agitation Fuseli rose, crying 'Let me get out! Let me get out!'

The smuggling piece on Saturday night was sound enough. The new Guthrie production, 'The Fire on the Snow', merits more space than I can give it this week.

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

## THE SPOKEN WORD

### The Artless Critic

THE RADIO CRITIC, or anyhow this one, is seized every now and then with the mad impulse, which he quickly suppresses, to turn a stone-deaf ear to those obstinate and necessary questionings—'For what sort of listener is this programme intended?' 'Is it good of its kind?'—which will often turn what he privately regards as a pig's ear into a silk, or at least a nylon, purse, and to be for one glorious week his own intolerant, pigheaded, cantankerous self. Such moments of rebellion are confined, I imagine, to the critic of that sprawling and intractable product 'The Spoken Word'. My more fortunate colleagues on this page are each concerned exclusively with an art, with a form of entertainment; but I, like Juvenal before me, have to cope with the whole farrago of man's activity, and much of it, between ourselves, is pretty dull stuff. Of course art of a sort comes into its presentation. There is a sense—a far-fetched one—in which a discussion on the relative merits of compost and chemical manures or a chat on sewerage may be termed a work of art, because the discriminating ear finds some entertainment in the shapeliness, clarity of expression, wit and so on with which these practical matters are presented to us, but (let us be honest) the object of such broadcasts is to pump information into us, and information, as often as not, has much in common with suet pudding.

Consider, for instance, last week's 'Taking Stock'. The subject 'Empire to Commonwealth' was discussed by five experts. One of them, Heather Harvey, till recently Commonwealth Research Secretary to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, acted as chairman; the other four were experts on Canada, Australia and New Zealand, India and South-East Asia, and South Africa, and they discussed the atti-

tudes and relations of these countries to the British Commonwealth and their possible developments. Now, were I to forget for a mad moment that I am a critic, I would confess that although I have a high regard for the Commonwealth I am constitutionally incapable of the smallest interest in the details of this discussion and that every ten minutes or so I threw agonised glances at the clock.

It is not, however, my business to exhibit my private weaknesses in public print, but to record that this was a well conducted and valuable discussion, that Heather Harvey controlled it with such skill that no red herring dared to raise its head, that all the speakers expressed themselves clearly and vigorously, and that agreements, disagreements and conclusions were admirably summarised by the chairman. In short, it was one of the best of this useful series.

The word series recalls another preoccupation of my department. Programmes such as 'Taking Stock', 'The Critics', 'Any Questions?', and 'We Beg to Differ' seem to put me in the position of an inspector whose duty it is to look in at unexpected moments, make notes, and write a report. In those series in which the team is constantly changing my report obviously concerns only a single programme, but when the team remains the same my position inevitably becomes more delicate. Seven weeks ago, for instance, I looked in on the new 'We Beg to Differ' and gave it a bad mark. Consequently it seemed to me only fair to give it time to find its feet and establish its style before paying another visit. I did so last week and I wish I could say I enjoyed myself, but, alas, I could detect no improvement yet. What is wrong with this team is that they talk too much and say too little and are far too apt to laugh when I am not amused. Now, if there's going to be laughter, I must insist on my own right as listener to start it.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

## BROADCAST MUSIC

### Half a Loaf

A COLLEAGUE, WHOSE OPINION on such matters I most respect, described the recent first performance of 'Fideho' at Covent Garden as 'ramshackle', and made no exception in his strictures even for Mme. Flagstad's Leonora. By Monday of last week, when the whole of the first act was broadcast in the Home Service, the company and especially the *prima donna* had evidently pulled themselves together. The performance, if not at all points Palladian, was certainly not to be dismissed with the contempt due to jerry-building, and Mme. Flagstad continued to convey to us the nobility and anguish of the heroine, though without indeed informing the great dramatic moments with the maximum of excitement. It was a serene and lovely performance, which grew in stature in the second act. For that reason and because it meant that listeners did not hear Julius Patzak's moving and dramatic performance as Florestan, it was a misfortune that programme-time could not be found for the whole work.

Among the other singers Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's Marzellina stood out as a well-sung and completely realised character. The rest were no more than more or less adequate singers of their music. What really was ramshackle was the use of two languages, the two sopranos and tenor singing in German but speaking in English, while the rest used English throughout. Now there is much to be said for opera in the vernacular (provided the singers can make their words audible, which few of those at Covent Garden do); and there is, in my opinion, still more to be said on musical grounds for opera in the



original language. But there is nothing whatever to be said in favour of bilingual opera, which is unintelligible to those who don't know what it is about, and ridiculous to those who do. If singers with a command of English cannot be found for the principal characters, it would surely be more satisfactory to give the whole performance in German.

At the Royal Festival Hall the great procession of British Orchestras continues. Last week Yorkshire, whose orchestra was not heard on the air, was followed by Manchester, in whose famous Hallé Orchestra the now equally famous acoustics almost met their match. For this orchestra

sounded extremely fine, and Sir John Barbirolli managed to achieve, at the beginning of Verdi's 'Requiem' for instance, a real *pianissimo*, a mere thread of sound barely above silence. The hall still remains unkind to string tone, as was evident in the Adagio and Fugue by Mozart, in which the clearly woven threads of counterpoint had no overall glamour.

This work was one of Mozart's intellectual exercises, and Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony, which preceded it, was the outcome of a somewhat similar intellectual research. It is the most 'learned' of its composer's symphonies, and from its solution of modern contrapuntal

problems he gained the mastery that gave us the sublime polyphony of the Sixth Symphony. But like Mozart's Fugue in C minor, the Symphony is also great music in its own right. For some reason—perhaps the composer's expressed dislike of it—it has not been as often played as its successors. It is not, perhaps, as 'comfortable' in what it says as the Fifth—but then what of the Sixth? In a performance as lucid as this, its strength and logic were everywhere impressive, and one would be hard put to it to say what in the composer's works is more beautiful than the slow movement.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

## Delius and the Song of Zarathustra

By NORMAN SUCKLING

'A Mass of Life' will be broadcast at 8.0 p.m. on Thursday, June 7 (Third)

NIETZSCHE'S *Zarathustra*, that somewhat frantic work, will live if, for no other reason than that it inspired Delius' 'Mass of Life'; and this will not be the only time in history that a musical creation has proved artistically superior to the book that called it forth. Not that Delius himself seems to have been altogether aware how, or on what grounds, he had surpassed Nietzsche. We are in a better position to judge this than he was, if only because of the passage of time—and also because the circumstances of Delius' apprenticeship to life and art made him more enthusiastic in his welcome to Nietzsche than we have any reason to be. To anyone brought up in the constrictive moral atmosphere of mid-Victorianism, Nietzsche must have come as a revelation—attended moreover with the specific danger of all revelations, that of being accepted too inclusively and uncritically. Delius did, I think, tend in a philosophic sense to accept him so; but in another way the peculiar sensibilities of the musician acted as a salutary counter-influence to the excesses of the poet. There lay in any case on Delius' generation a religious incubus, which consisted in supposing that there was some moral value to be found in self-frustration; and it is not the least of the great qualities of his 'Mass of Life' that it expresses supremely the liberation from this incubus, so necessary before we could return with freedom to anything properly worth calling religion.

The faults of Nietzsche's poem are obvious enough to us now; the quasi-epic language of a 'Wardour Street' cast (which Nietzsche as an aphorist was elsewhere perfectly able to avoid), the would-be profundity which is so often no more than mistiness and mystification—e.g. the strings of apostrophising exclamations and interrogatives, some of which make an unwelcome appearance in Delius' own text—and the constantly raised voice, not unrelated to the piled-up superlatives so wearisome in Wagner. But a great deal of the facile criticism of Nietzsche, so familiar to us now, is both unjust and uncomprehending: for instance, the attempt to treat him as a warning modern example of *hubris*. There is in fact nothing any more arrogant or megalomaniac in his idea of the 'superman' than in the Christian idea of the 'regenerate man'; anything that really weakens the case for the one is equally applicable to the other. The difference between them lies mainly in the fact that Nietzsche was singing the praise of a different complex of human qualities; but not necessarily any less admirable qualities. The reader should perhaps be reminded that the caricatured version of Nietzsche, made by the Germans of the new Empire, no more fairly represents him than the monasticism of the

Dark Ages or the excesses of Calvinist puritanism are typical of Christianity. His lyrical praise of struggle is in itself no more and no less apt to pervert humanity than the ideal of the 'Christian soldier' or, more generally, the common conception of life as a battle.

But in any case this side of Nietzsche is precisely the one entering least into Delius' musical equivalent of him, for it is a music concerned rather with fulfilment than with striving. (It is noteworthy that in a more recent day Vaughan Williams has also found fit to eliminate from the *Pilgrim's Progress* most of its fighting atmosphere in order to relate it more surely to the essentials of an artistic outlook on life.) The Cromwellian Puritan served a different, though no more admirable a God than Nietzsche's 'blond beast'; but while the one is not any more adequate to 'faith' than the other to 'life', neither is a convincing herald of the best that we can draw from our experience, because both have proposed for general application the attitude of an imperfectly balanced mind. The ecstasies of 'election', whether to life on earth or beyond it, are no more conducive to human dignity than those of alcoholism.

And it is here that Delius appears as the interpreter—a little in spite of himself—of what was more valuable in the message of Nietzsche. Where the poet tended unfortunately to praise 'Dionysiac' intoxication as a desirable state in itself, the musician gives us a rhapsody which has not taken leave of lucidity; where Nietzsche went out of his way to glorify 'life' as such, Delius (whether or no he believed himself to be accepting Nietzsche's philosophy) was musically more aware of what in life was most worth glorifying. His outlook was, paradoxically enough, the more sober of the two; neither in the 'Mass of Life' nor in the 'Requiem' (which ought to be performed as a kind of complement to it) is he dazzled by his own rapture: 'I honour the man who can love life, yet without base fear can die'. His Dance Songs are tinged always with the poignant regrets of one who is 'looking his last on all things lovely every hour'. How different from the wild efforts of Strauss to produce music whose dancers shall appear, in Nietzsche's slightly comic phrase, to stand on their heads—efforts which in the upshot can do no more than present the dance of the higher mortals in terms of the Viennese waltz. The 'Mass of Life' is full of moments recalling—or announcing—those supreme peaks of Delius' contemplative manner, such as the hushed climax of the Violin Concerto or the 'Song of the High Hills', where he seems to be savouring the beauties of his experience before they pass for ever, and to be celebrating that which is all the better a prefiguration of eternity for the

fact that in a temporal sense it can be no more than momentary.

For in Delius there is apparent a truth which Nietzsche always rather left to be inferred: that the lovely and admirable things of life are a renewal, not a progress; that for any generation of men they will be overwhelmed in the oblivion that overtakes all things, but are precious none the less. The 'Requiem' ends with the promise of another springtime, but Delius knew—none better—that the bleak comfort thus offered to men in their dissolution is the only comfort available to humanity. Unfavourable critics have written of Delius that he had a 'death-tending sensibility'. They have gone nearer to the heart of the matter than they knew. His consciousness of death provides the key to most of what gives a meaning to life—for the very reason that it dispensed him from any need to preoccupy himself with the outcome of life in a future either side of the grave. We had already learned from 'Tristan' that the surest fulfilment of love was in death; now there is presented to us a work in which the same is said, more or less, with regard to life itself. And in terms of a musical affinity; for Delius—as also Strauss—has couched his Night Song in the same tonality of B major consecrated by the *Liebestod*, and the key combines with the identical symbolism of the Night to convey a similar message.

In this Mass of Life the finest passages seem concerned rather with death—not really a contradiction, since, as Valéry said, death is one of the most characteristic properties of life. Zarathustra sings of his 'great conquest' and 'the Crown of the Laughing One', but they have nothing to do with survival either in this life or in a life to come—only with moments of fulfilment, which some have known before us and whose renewal we may predict with a sure recognition, in others who in their turn may for a time hold off the final frustration. 'O break, heart!' sings Zarathustra at these moments of greatest fulfilment, 'is it not folly still to be living?' And the Eternity celebrated in the closing section of Delius' work is the only true eternity—that which depends neither on survival nor on evolution, and whose prefiguration is the moment, not the continuity.

With the second volume of their *Historical Anthology of Music* (Oxford, 50s.) Professor Archibald Davison and Dr. Willi Apel have completed their invaluable history of music in examples from the earliest times to the age of the Viennese classics. The new volume contains 129 complete compositions, or very substantial excerpts, by composers ranging in date from Monteverdi and Frescobaldi to Bach's sons and Dittersdorf, with annotations, references to gramophone records, and translations of vocal texts.





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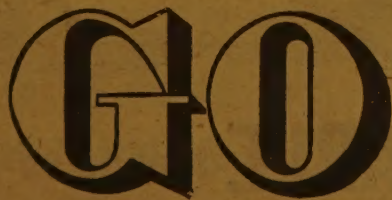
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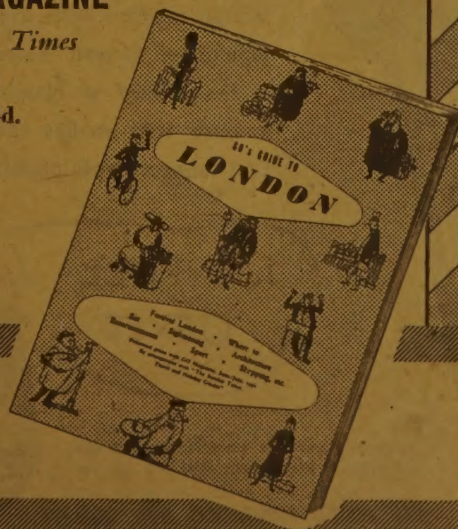


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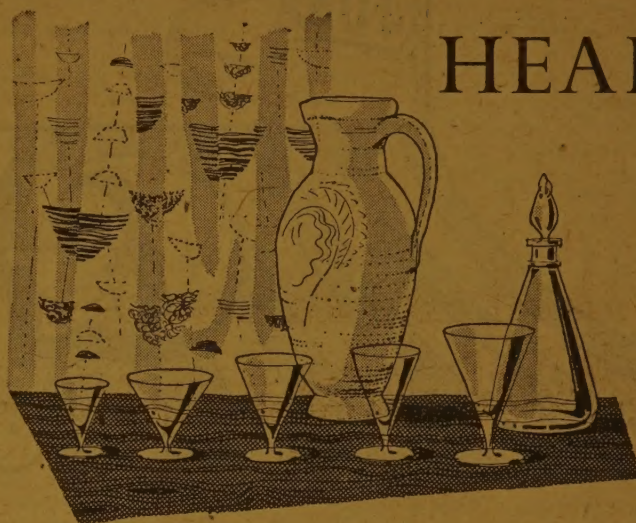
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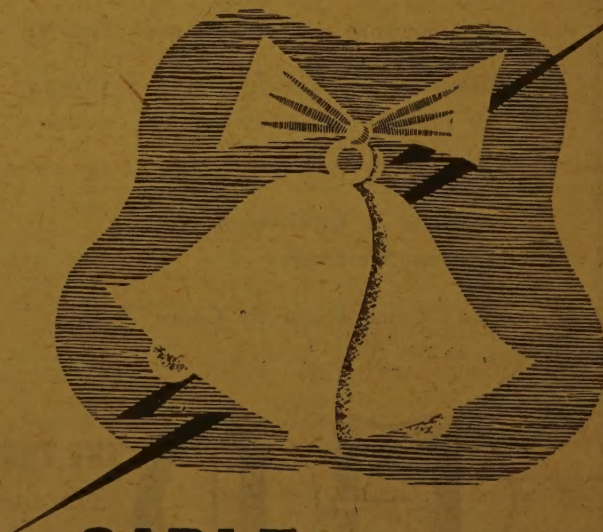
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Advice for the Housewife

HINTS ON DISTEMPERING

AT ONE TIME my husband and I thought we knew rather a lot about decorating, but we have learnt a good deal from experience. We have come to the conclusion that, in common with all amateurs, we stand or fall by how well or how badly we do the preparation for the job. Collect everything you are likely to require—things like distemper and paint and turps and linseed oil, sand-paper and so on. Clear the room of all furniture as far as possible. I always wash the ceiling with clean water and an old distemper brush and allow it to dry, having made sure that I have got all the old distemper off. A greasy kitchen ceiling probably has to be washed with sugar soap, but one has to be very careful to see that it has been rinsed off.

Having washed the walls, see that any cracks and holes are filled with paste filler. When the filler has dried, sand-paper it flush with the wall.

Mix the distemper slowly to make sure that all the lumps are dissolved; some professionals put it over a gas stove and warm it very gently. It is a good idea to mix some petrifying liquid with the distemper to give it a better and more lasting finish. If you do add a petrifying liquid you will find that very little water is required for mixing, but it is very difficult to say the exact thickness to which you should mix the distemper. We found that two thinner coats are usually much more effective than one thick one, especially when you are covering a surface of a different colour. With rough stippled plaster walls it is almost impossible to do it with anything but a very thin mixture, and here an old stubby brush is invaluable.

We have found that it is better to shut all windows before beginning distempering so that a draught will not dry the distemper too quickly and cause hard lines.

When I am distempering ceilings I dip the

brush in a mere half inch to avoid splashing. And I find that a rag wound round the hand helps to keep the handle of the brush dry and the distemper from running down hand and arm, which is most unpleasant. I work from side to side on the ceiling so that the edges are not allowed time to dry, and work the brush in all directions, and I don't attempt to finish off in any one way. When doing the walls I begin at the window and work away from the light, and above all, I wipe off all splashes from the floor and paintwork while they are still wet; it saves hours of time later on.

DORA BASS

PANCAKE SOUFFLÉ

Pancake Soufflé is several pancakes on top of one another, each sprinkled with sugar and grated almonds. For four people take:

- 1 oz. of margarine
- 1½ oz. of plain flour
- ¼ pint of milk
- 1 egg
- 1 oz. of sugar

For the top of the pancakes you need:

- 1 oz. of icing sugar
- 1 oz. of grated almonds

Melt the margarine in a saucepan. Remove it from the stove. Add the flour and stir well. Add the milk and stir again. Return it to the stove, stirring all the time until the mixture has thickened. Take off the heat. While still hot add the yolk of the egg. Stir until the mixture is quite smooth. Set aside to cool. Now whisk the white of the egg, and add the sugar. Whisk again until quite stiff. Add this to the mixture, stirring it in very lightly. Get the frying pan very hot and nicely greased. This mixture is sufficient for four or five pancakes, so pour only enough for one into the hot pan, and fry it on

one side only. Slide this on to a shallow fire-proof dish, placing the fried side downwards. Sprinkle the top with a little of the sugar and grated almonds mixed together. Add the next pancake, again fried side down. Sprinkle again with sugar and almonds; and so on, until all the mixture is used. Finally sprinkle the top pancake with almonds and sugar.

Place the dish in a hot oven for twenty to twenty-five minutes. When ready your soufflé should be twice its original height. It should be eaten the moment it is ready.

By the way, I always keep a pod of vanilla in the jar with my icing sugar as it gives it such a delicate taste.

ELIZABETH DE BIRO

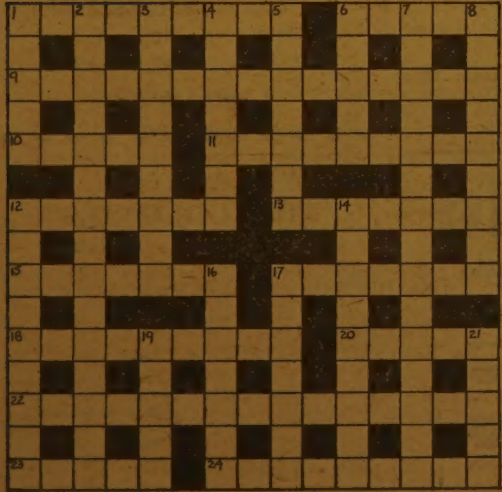
Some of Our Contributors

- J. B. McGEACHY (page 859): associate editor of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*
- JOHN MASON BROWN (page 861): associate editor and dramatic critic of *The Saturday Review of Literature*; author of *Broadway in Review*, *The Art of Playgoing*, *Upstage—The American Theatre in Performance*, etc.
- RONALD GOULD (page 862): General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers; has recently returned from a visit to Soviet Russia as member of N.U.T. delegation; President, N.U.T., 1943-44; Headmaster of Welton County School, 1941-46
- MICHAEL LINDSAY (page 867): Senior Research Fellow, Australian National University Research School of Pacific Studies; author of *New China*; *Three Views* (with A. B. van der Sprenkel and Robert Guillain)
- A. G. LEHMANN (page 869): Lecturer in the Department of French Studies, Manchester University, author of *The Symbolist Aesthetic in France, 1885-1895*

Crossword No. 1,100. For June Days. By Altair

Prize (for the first five correct solutions opened): Book token, value 12s. 6d.

Closing date: First post on Thursday, June 7



CLUES—ACROSS

- 1. 'But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my place Enchair'd to-morrow, — the field' (Tennyson) (9).
- 6. Girl in palindromic form of address (5).
- 9. Tug African train (anag.) (15, two words, hyphen).
- 10. Wheel locking contrivances or what they prevent (5).
- 11. e.g. Cleveland or Lincoln (9).
- 12. Keeps modest repeat warm (7, hyphen).
- 13. Old stager (7).
- 15. Tree perhaps, with knobs on (7).
- 17. Primrose League executors, in short, provide medical hammers (7).
- 18. Too fleeting for the jockey to complete the precious stone (9).
- 20. Often found beneath the ice (5).
- 22. Not a vintage beverage (15, four words).
- 23. Atlas of a sort provided for the Hindus by snake king (5).
- 24. In English not 'the strong-wing'd music of Homer' according to Tennyson (9).

DOWN

- 1. 'Fold their tents, like the —, and as silently steal away' (Longfellow) (5).
- 2. Washing gadgets of English origin? (15, two words).
- 3. AJAX: —, learn me the proclamation. (Shakespeare) (9).

- 4. A memento united for emaciation (7).
- 5. John Worthy, J.P. did not really spell his Christian name so (7).
- 6. Mohammedan lawyer in plain clothes (5).
- 7. The Bellman advised the Beaver to buy a second-hand one for protection (15, three words).
- 8. Soldier in a pub? (9, hyphens).
- 12. Birds which should combine ferocity with wisdom (9, hyphen).
- 14. The Biscay shook and almost —'d her (Enoch Arden) (9).
- 16. No chord in a Scottish town (7).
- 17. Not a levy on parrots (7, two words).
- 19. Lawless Sicilians (5).
- 21. Palindromic method of detection (5).

Solution of No. 1,098

Prizewinners:  
A. J. Batchelor (London, S.E.6);  
E. C. Double (Dartford); Mrs. R. L. Kemp (Belfast);  
A. L. Kneen (Heswall); Miss P. M. E. Martin (Riverhead)

C	A	P	T	A	I	N	C	U	T	T	L	E
S	P	E	A	R	M	I	N	T	O	R	B	Y
C	I	C	E	R	O	B	A	H	R	A	M	E
I	L	A	D	A	S	U	N	I	M	B	U	S
S	U	N	S	T	A	R	D	N	E	B	G	E
S	S	I	R	H	U	G	O	T	R	I	G	O
O	H	Y	P	E	R	I	O	N	S	N	I	T
R	O	C	K	S	A	N	D	M	A	N	N	A
S	S	I	S	I	N	G	L	A	S	S	S	T
O	E	R	E	S	U	R	P	L	I	C	E	O
D	A	N	T	E	S	P	I	O	N	K	O	P

NOTES

All the Across lights are names of Derby winners.  
Across: 1. *Dombey and Son*, Chap. 10. 15. *Dombey and Son*, Chap. 11. 17. 'Omar Khayyam' 20. 1894 Derby favourite at 9 to 2 on 30. 'King Henry V', IV. i. 32. Won three classics in 1903.  
Down: 8. *Great Expectations*, Chap. 30. 33-40. Judges 4. 21.

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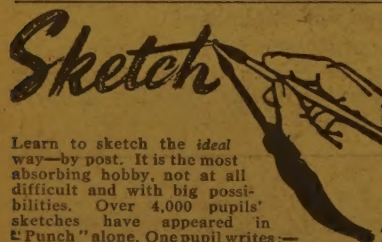
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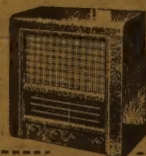
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